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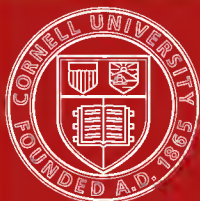
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The open fire, and other essays, by Willa



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The Illumined Face

Down the Road

Trees and Men

The Open Fire

And Other Essays

By

WILLIAM VALENTINE KELLEY

I have warmed both hands before the fire of
life, and now am sitting by the glowing embers



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WILLIAM VALENTINE KELLEY

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To
WESLEYAN UNIVERSITY
My
ALMA MATER

AND

TO MY BRETHREN IN THE MINISTRY,
PARTICULARLY TO MY COMRADES OF
FORTY YEARS IN THE NEW YORK
EAST CONFERENCE, A BODY IN
WHICH, WHEN THE BEST MAN DOES
HIS BEST, HE ONLY PROVES HIMSELF
WORTHY OF HIS ASSOCIATIONS

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INTRODUCTION

THE introduction is an anomaly; written last it is placed first—afterthought posing as forethought.

It is sometimes the author's *bête noire*, a cause of perplexity. Who shall write it? If the author, what shall he say about his own book? For him to commend it would be unseemly: "Let another man praise thee and not thine own mouth." To apologize for it would be humiliating and self-stultifying, for if it needs apology or defense, why does he publish it? Besides, the critics—if any notice the book—will save him the trouble of pointing out its faults and deficiencies. If the author avoids his dilemma by asking a friend to write the introduction, he may be laying an unwelcome burden on an innocent person, too polite to decline. And, if a book is bold enough to brave the perils of print, ought it not to have the courage to face publicity without usher or chaperon?

Unless an introduction explains or refers to the book's insides, the name is a misnomer; it is not, properly speaking, an introduction. Yet even Edmund C. Stedman's so-called introduction to one of his own books makes no reference to what follows, and is, in reality, a separate essay on a different subject and might as properly

appear at the end as at the beginning of the volume.

Responsibility for the publication of this book rests with those who have requested it, and with the great Publishing House which, in the one hundred and thirty-third year of its increasingly prosperous existence and ever-widening influence, takes the risk of offering to its vast public *The Open Fire And Other Essays*.

If, in deference to custom, a preface is expected, then, in order that this may have the semblance of an introduction, by making some reference to the contents, the author ventures to remark that these essays have some range and variety of theme, and to say that they are written in the spirit of Browning's lines:

"This world's no blot or blank;
It means intensely and means good.
To find its meaning is my meat and drink."

THE OPEN FIRE: A REVERIE

"THE open fire is a primitive, elemental thing; it is a bit of the red heart of nature laid bare; it is a dragon of the prime docile and friendly there in the corner. What pictures! what activity! how social! You are not permitted to forget it for a moment. How it responds when you nudge it. How it rejoices when you feed it. Why, an open fire in your room is a whole literature. It supplements your library as nothing else in the room does or can."

Not a poetic Burroughs rhapsody, this, but description fairly scientific and verified by common experience. "A primitive and elemental thing," wrote the master of Slabsides, well acquainted with the elements. And so it is: the subtle, mysterious, mesmeric spell of the open fire is elemental, like to those which winds and waters cast over human sensitivity—as witching and irresistible as they are inexplicable. The four elements the ancients knew were earth, air, water, fire. All these have the call on man. His sensibilities lie open to them. Their touch notifies him that at least the fringes of his constitution are interwoven with the world, and that to the powers called Nature his kinship is close and his subjection sure. Physically, they own him,

and at any moment may take possession. The cosmic tides wash all his coasts and flush all his inlets.

Exceptionally sensitive to all things elemental was the emotional nature of Robert Burns, who said that the influence which most exalted and enraptured him was that of a stormy wind howling among the trees and raging over the plains. And the sound of moving air is one of the stirring elemental voices, whether whispering in the silky grass, or rustling leafy branches, or solemnizing the pine forest with a sonorous chant, or roaring in wild tempests across the somber sky.

Equally potent with the voices of the winds are the voices of the waters in the elemental spell they cast over human kind, as in the rhythmic booming of the breakers on the beach or the cannonading of great waves against the cliff, or the sibilance of receding wavelets smoothing out the seaside sands. Bishop Warren could remember that during weeks of tramping and climbing in the high Alps, he and his friend fell asleep each night within hearing of the hoarse roar or muffled thunder of some cataract or mountain torrent, and found it like a wild, but soothing lullaby sung by Mother Nature to her tired children. Gilbert White, the naturalist, fabled how a young tortoise went abroad and kept a diary of his travels. The pleasantest recollection recorded in the hard-shell tourist's notes of a sea voyage was that "the rippling of the water

against the sides of our vessel as we sailed along was a very lulling and composing sound to go to sleep by." An instinctive wisdom, reenforced by experience, led the Cistercian monks to locate their monasteries by the sounding side of running water in secluded valleys, and to inscribe upon the inner walls a sentiment from Bernard of Clairvaux, which Wordsworth rendered into English:

"Here Man more purely lives, less oft doth fall,
More promptly rises, walks with stricter heed,
More safely rests, dies happier, is freed
Earlier from cleansing fires, and gains withal
A brighter crown."

We all understand Coleridge in the "Ancient Mariner" when he tells of mysterious music in the rigging and says that the sails

" . . . made on
A pleasant noise till noon,
A noise like of a hidden brook
In the leafy month of June,
That to the sleeping woods all night
Singeth a quiet tune";

and we understand Browning's picture in "Saul" of the channel where "the water was wont to go warbling so softly and well."

Most of us have a brook flowing through the green fields of memory. There is a New Jersey brook which forever makes music to the man who is pushing this pen. Often he hears it flowing through the middle of the night. To him

"Stony Brook" is not a silent stream slow-moving toward Raritan River. Tinkling over its pebbly bed through its earliest stages and his, it sings of a friendship which began on its grassy and wild-flowered banks in the far-away meadows of boyhood. That little stream runs through his very soul, and seems to empty far on into the River of Life which Saint John saw in his celestial vision, into the actual glory prefigured by which vision the comrade of Stony Brook disappeared one wild March morning when the angels called his soul. And mention was made of Stony Brook between those two men, boys together for fifty-four years, when one of them lay dying at the age of sixty-seven.

Le Gallienne, defending Walter Pater's literary style from the charge of artificiality, preciousness, and excessive ornamentation, speaks of Pater's sincerity as seen in many passages of delicious simplicity, fresh country vistas, and pictures of primitive color, all full of verisimilitude and of truth told with delicate fidelity. Le Gallienne says that in Pater's pages, among the rich colors, exquisite odors, sweet music, and shapely forms of his literary artistry, we find three things—reverence, reality, and purity; and all through Pater's writings, the soul, in its wanderings, is healthily aware of heaven and earth, "never strays out of sight of the white temples of the gods nor out of hearing of the sound of running water." Contact with the elements is

favorable to normality and balance. "Heaven and earth from my window," exclaimed a grateful woman, glad for her new sight of them, as she gazed out on the wondrous beauty of the October world from her fourth-story Clifton Springs room, to which she had just been brought back convalescent from the surgical ward. Health coincided with ecstasy at the sight of heaven and earth. Heaven and earth, temples of worship and running brooks, altar fires and hearth fires—all of them elemental things—are alike essential in literature and in life, to health, sanity, normality, and poise. The condemnation and the ruin of much modern life—social, commercial, æsthetic—is that it is so far from the healthful and the sacred, from the running brooks and white temples, and the things they signify, and in consequence, is so artificial, so false, so godless, so vicious, so rotten.

Because the spell of the open fire, like the voice of winds and the voice of many waters, is primal and elemental, as the Master of Slabsides and of Woodchuck Lodge remarks, therefore it also has easy access to what is primitive and elemental in man. Sidney Lanier held two things necessary to the making of a home—an open fire and music; two things which are alike in this, that all can feel their magic spell, but none explain or translate it distinctly into language. Emerson said, "My idea of a home is a house in which each member of the family can on the in-

stant kindle an open fire in his or her private room." A Baltimore professor of literature, feeling his home to be now for the first time really complete, diverts a lecturer from the bee line between train and lecture platform, apparently to show the passer-by a new fireplace just built into his library, over which the man of letters seemed happier than a child with a new toy, or a millionaire with a new yacht, or a spendthrift with a new automobile which he has mortgaged his house to purchase. That doughty veteran General Simon Bolivar Buckner boasted of his century-old log cabin, his birthplace and latest residence, because every room has a big fireplace where they can "bake apples, pop corn, roast game, and make hot drinks." Not for Elihu Root's twenty-five-thousand-dollar a year steam-heated apartment in a Fifth Avenue flat house in Gotham would the proud old "Johnnie Reb" exchange his clay plastered house of logs with its blazing open fires. A famous editor named Buckley, planning his house to suit himself, built it in the hill country of northern New Jersey, with fifty-eight windows and eight open fireplaces, to insure plenty of light, ventilation, and cheeriness. For Elizabeth Hamilton the splendor of palaces has no sight so delightful as "the bonnie blithe blink o' her ain fireside." T. A. Daly, the laureate of Little Italy, informs us in verse that he has bought an old colonial fireplace, and invites us all to come and enjoy it with him

so soon as he can find the wherewithal to build a house around it.

Take away the word "fireside," with all that it connotes and suggests, and you have done much to rob life of meaning, sanctity, and desirability. The hearth fire is the emblem, synonym, and acme of domesticity. That erudite instructor, Etymology, informs us that the fireplace is, in Latin, literally the "focus" of the house; upon which definite experience and the dictionary are agreed. It is the point at which the life of the home concentrates and confers. Only the dining-room table matches it in power to assemble the family. About it, at the day's close, the generations gather as David's flock came, one by one, to the sheepfold when he played the tune all the sheep knew.

Even a sight of the fire warms the imagination. Rufus Choate, one of the greatest advocates of all time, his mind saturated with the Bible, came into the Crawford House in the White Mountains one day, cold and shivering. The instant he caught sight of the blaze in the great fireplace he felt warm, even before the heat-rays could reach him, and he exclaimed, "Do you remember that verse in Isaiah, 'Aha, I am warm. I have *seen* the fire'?"

Is an open fire one of the "Aids to Reflection" not found in Coleridge's great book? Is the combustion of logs on the hearth conducive to the combustion of phosphorus in the brain? When

an ingenious real estate promoter in the forest sections of Greater New York city, yearning to bless mankind and parenthetically to promote his own enterprise, hit upon the novel expedient of opening a Thinking Resort, he did it by constructing a huge fireplace and chimney, around which a Virginia negro, who knew how, built for him from the woods of Emerson Hills a very large log cabin, which is dignified with the name of "Philosopher's Retreat," and is offered as a quiet refuge for pestered and distracted thinkers, who are invited from near and far to come and enjoy a season of meditation in the peaceful comfort of that big log fire, which is relied upon to produce a superior quality of thinking, already in great demand and as sure to appreciate in value as are eligible corner lots in the promised course of boom-town events. This Philosopher's Retreat, erected out of real estate profits, is dedicated to the use of "lovers of nature, statesmen with political futures before them or behind them; for those wishing to reflect on the gratitude of future generations or the ingratitude of present and past generations; for philosophers, born as such or grown to be such by the trials of professional, social, commercial, or political strife." Such is one practical philanthropist's contribution to the promotion of deep thinking in America, and incidentally to the fine art of advertising. No crusty old unphilosophical curmudgeon growling outside the Staten Island log

cabin and repeating sarcastically the childish drama which began, "Will you walk into my parlor? said the spider to the fly," can prevent us from using the incident to emphasize, or at least to query, the intellectual value of the open fire. So great a body as the Association of Arts and Sciences has been seen in session in that Philosopher's Retreat, knitting its high brow and trying to think with the aid of a roaring fire, which is not so absurd as the unscientific might suppose. One man sat before an open fire shortly after reading the newest conception of matter. He was meditating on the marvels brought to mental view by the atomic theory; he was considering what vast subrealms of the infinitely minute are revealed by the microscope or inferred by science. While meditating thus and watching the sparks go up the chimney-throat, his scientific imagination sees submicroscopic atomic systems—galaxies whirling inside each tiny spark that floats upward on the chimney draught. This scientific vision of the infinitely small below him, added to his knowledge of the infinitely large above, made one watcher of an open fire realize himself to be a creature placed midway between the infinite and the infinitesimal in this astounding universe; the most amazing and immensely significant fact being that he finds himself to be an incurably curious and considerably competent observer of it all, having by his very constitution a search warrant to explore, and

ability to take knowledge of both the bottomless abyss and the topless empyrean, his mind so near akin to the Intelligence seen at work in all the universe that he is capable of thinking God's thoughts after him, as Kepler said with awe-struck ecstasy and adoring love. Such cosmic reflections as these were suggested and verified by an open fire. The human sense of kinship with the infinite overhead is uniquely expressed by Angela Morgan in verses read before the Poetry Society of America :

“I am aware,
As I sit quietly here in my chair,
Sewing or reading or braiding my hair,
I am aware of the systems that swing
Through the aisles of creation on heavenly wing—
I am aware of a marvelous thing.
Trail of the comets in furious flight,
Thunders of beauty that shatter the night,
Terrible triumph of pageants that march
To the trumpets of time through Eternity's arch.
I am aware of the splendor that ties
All the things of the earth with the things of the skies.
Here in my body the heavenly heat,
Here in my veins the melodious beat
Of the planets that circle Divinity's feet.
As I sit silently here in my chair,
I am aware.”

As to the productive value of thinking anywhere, it seems, like everything else, to be in dispute. Voltaire had hope for the world when it shall have learned how to think. Montesquieu believed that the world is to be redeemed by men who

think. But a nineteenth-century sage said, "Beware when the Almighty lets loose a thinker on this planet, for then all things are at risk"; and a poet says that "thinking makes one old"; and now comes Anatole France gravely warning us that thinking is the most dangerous of occupations, and if indulged in too freely will break up the world. And there we are. To think or not to think, that is the question. At this point we overhear the dialogue between the owl and the cat. The cat went to the owl to find out how to be happy. The owl said: "My opinion is, cat, that the only thing that is necessary is to think, think profoundly and deeply upon some philosophical question."

But the cat said, "What shall I think about?"

"O, it isn't so much the question you think of as the thinking, the mental exercise, that will give you peace. But this is a good question: 'The owl came from the egg, and the egg comes from the owl—now, which was first?' "

The cat thought a moment, then said, "How am I going to settle the question?"

"Why, my friend, you can't settle it, and that is the beauty of the question. If you could, it would end all your thinking."

To get happiness out of the insolubility of life's problems seems a bright idea, and may be the part of wisdom. Philosophy, like the colored preacher, sometimes attempts to "explain de

unexplainable and unscrew de unscrutable;" and if thinking on insoluble questions can insure happiness, "I'm sure we should all be as happy as kings," since "the world is so full of a number of things" which philosophy, like science, cannot explain.

Whether sitting by an open fire is usually conducive to much thinking may be doubted. Hudson Maxim describes a husky laborer coming in from his day's work, appeasing his fierce hunger with a homely meal, and then humping himself up in the chimney corner, contentedly smoking his peaceful pipe, while the good wife cautions the children not to disturb father, because he is in a brown study. And when one little urchin approaches and says, "Papa, what are you doing?" the answer he gets is, "O, I'm just thinking." Mr. Maxim says the tired man is not thinking at all; he is just luxuriating in the comfort of merely feeling; or, in stately scientific language, "He is enjoying the goings-on of his reflex processes. Thinking would be an effort. Therefore he has inhibited from action and consciousness as many of the higher thought-centers as possible, consistent with a waking state." The consensus of experienced observers is that strenuous and resultful cerebration is not the usual effect of the open fire on the human constitution. Probably it was not while sitting in an easy-chair before the fire, pervaded by a blissful sense of physical *bien être*, that Gutenberg thought out

his printing press, or Stevenson his locomotive, or Fulton his steamboat, or Morse his telegraph, or Howe his sewing machine, or McCormick his reaper, or Bell his telephone, or Edison his phonograph and incandescent light, or any of his thousand inventions.

To be sure, Hopkinson Smith pretends that while seated "In the Arm Chair at the Inn"—the old inn of William the Conqueror on the Normandy coast—before the fire, he overheard in his mind a sculptor, a painter, an architect, an engineer, a writer, and various other friends engaged in a brilliant discussion of art, literature, love, and other things, covering almost the whole philosophy of life. But as this Mr. Smith is a professional romancer who prints books for pelf, a very imaginative and fictional gentleman, it is permissible for us to doubt whether it really was while luxuriating in the relaxing self-indulgence of an easy-chair before the fire that his superactive brain evolved the philosophies and tender romances and thrilling adventures contained in his latest book. Jowett of Balliol, when asked what he had been thinking about while silently gazing long and steadily into the fire with the look of a man completely lost in profound thought, replied, "The fact is I was not thinking of anything." The great Greek professor was one with the farmer who, being asked what he did in winter, answered, "Sometimes I sets and thinks, and sometimes I just sets."

One man who found fireside thinking and study
futile envied his drowsing dog:

"He lay in dreamland, one side of the hearth,
And I, in books a-browsing, at the other.
No question dimmed my clear philosophy.
I knew I knew I knew.
But as I read from misty Thales onward—
Learning what learned men have thought of thought—
I lost my way (while still my spaniel slumbered)
In Plato's tangle, Aristotle's too;
While still my spaniel innocently slumbered,
I knew I thought I knew.
Along the years from Eckhart to Spinoza.
Through Leibnitz, Locke, and others worse by far,
I groped my way (while still my spaniel slumbered);
I thought I thought I knew.
The German giants led me in a flounder
Through depths of dim epistemology;
I wriggled on, until at last it ended.
I knew that nought I knew.
Then rose my spaniel fresh from blissful slumber,
As blithe as any great Galileo—
He shook his hide, yawning a yawn that told me
'Twas he, not I, that knew."

"While the fire was burning I mused" reverses the psalmist's statement, "While I was musing the fire burned," but fairly describes the common experience. "I simmer," said old Palgrave, "as the liquor doth on the fire before it beginneth to boil." The fireside is a place for musing and reverie; "cogitate" is too purposeful, and "ruminate" has too bovine an odor. Soothed by the warm, balmy, and ambrosial air, pensiveness strokes us with its velvet hands and we succumb

to the mesmeric spell. The hymn for the fire-side is not "Awake, my soul, stretch every nerve," nor "My soul, be on thy guard," but, rather, "My willing soul would stay in such a frame as this." The soothing, tranquillizing, restorative touch of elemental things is reported in what one man finds: "When things have gone wrong in business during the day, and my mind is full of care and cumber, I can generally forget it all by going out to look at the stars, or by listening to music, or by watching the open fire." A man under the stars or by the fire is in a mood to hear Schiller's word: "O cast away the fret and worry of this earthly life; rise on the wings of beauty to the realm of the ideal. And when you have issued forth from the trammels of time and sense into the freedom of the kingdom of thought, lo, fear and doubt will pass away." As beautiful, benign, cheering, and comforting as a summer evening may be the brilliance of a winter night, all asparkle outdoors and in. Outside "in the icy air of night, the stars that oversprinkle all the heavens seem to twinkle with a crystalline delight"; inside, the sparks that fly up like swarms of golden bees mimic the twinkling fireflies of the sky and make the night indoors as brilliant and elemental as the spangled firmament.

Through the centuries many notable firelit faces have been snapshotted and preserved, illumined, some of them by the glare of conflagra-

tions, some by the glow of hearthfires. Looking back, they appear like a torchlight procession moving through the dark. In far-back regions, where history and legend blend, the flames of burning Troy make visible to all after times the face of Sparta's stolen child. A Baltimorean, who has a Helen of his own, tells us that when he sits with her before the hearth, looking at her face flushed by the firelight's ruddy glow and watching her feed the flames with aromatic pine cones, his Homer comes back to him and he sees the face of that earlier Helen, whose beauty was the prize of Priam's son and around which the action of the Iliad revolves, lit by the blaze of burning Troy. Little Robert Browning, sitting at evening on his father's knee before the hearth in the library, listened entranced to the ancient tale of the siege of Troy, until, to his excited imagination, the mounting flames in the fireplace were the burning city, and among the glowing coals the lad saw many-oared triremes and helmeted figures, with spears and shields, and the faces of Menelaus and Paris and Helen. That potent face which "launched a thousand ships and burnt the topless towers of Ilium," and "drew the dreaming keels of poesy across the seas of all subsequent ages," is so immortally famous that Synge, the Irish dreamer, in the twentieth Christian century, imagines the holy prophets straining the bars of Paradise to lay eyes on Helen of Troy.

The conflagration of five sevenths of Rome (64 B. C.) makes more lurid against the dark background of antiquity the hideous and hateful face of Nero, who was fiddler, æsthete, lecher, matricide, and suicide, achieving endless infamy for himself within the same number of years as the Man of Nazareth took to live his life and die the death which redeemed the world, gathering to himself the endless worship of adoring millenniums.

Pictures of fire-lit faces by the fireside are usually good and pleasant to look upon; the home hearth is not a bad man's resort; some place like the barroom suits him better; and always it is the pictures of the good that are everywhere more apt to be preserved. Quite typical is a pleasing seventeenth-century picture which shows us Robert Herrick, the master among English poets of pastoral lyrics and tender love verses, incumbent of a Devonshire "living," "a rather timid bachelor gentleman of middle age, sitting by the fire in a snug and modest country parsonage," and writing out of a gentle heart his quaintly simple thanksgiving to God for the homely dwelling which shelters him in his Dean Prior parish:

"A little house, whose humble roof
Is weather proof;
Under the spars of which I lie
Both soft and dry;
Where thou, my chamber for to ward,
Hast set a guard

Oh, harmless thought, to watch and keep
Me, while I sleep, . . .
Some brittle sticks of thorn or briar
Make me a fire.
Close by whose living coal I sit,
And glow like it."

In American history there is an early picture of Thomas Jefferson, with the hearth light on his face, reading the Gospels before the fire on winter evenings and getting therefrom the ethical ideas which went into the Declaration of Independence. A later American picture shows young Abraham Lincoln lying face downward before the hearth, his long, lank, angular form stretched full length on the clay floor of a humble cabin, with the firelight on his homely features, studying hard and beginning to get himself ready for the Emancipation Proclamation and the immortal Gettysburg address and the solemn majesty of his second inaugural and the apotheosis at the touch of an assassin's bullet at the climax of his illustrious career.

Young William Winter once saw Longfellow sitting by his open fireplace late at night, after all his household had retired, watching the flames, listening to the wind in the chimney, musing and occasionally jotting down with a pencil whatever came into his thoughts.

David Gray carried in his memory a fireside picture of Charles Eliot Norton, a teacher of rare charm and penetrating quality who taught gen-

erations of students the art of making life sweet and sound and fine with high ideals and noble conduct. This is the picture: "It was toward the close of his active life. The lamplight and the firelight fell upon the bent figure of a scholar in his chair. He held a book. The pleasant room was walled with books. The portrait by Veronese of a Venetian lady with a pearl necklace glowed dimly in the subdued light. The old man's voice rose and fell in even, modulated cadences. He was reading aloud from Browning's great poem:

'Well, here's the platform, here's the proper place:
 Hail to your purlieus,
 All ye highfliers of the feathered race,
 Swallows and curlews,
 Here's the top-peak: the multitude below
 Live, for they can, there:
 This man decided not to Live, but Know—
 Bury this man there?
 Here—here's his place, where meteors shoot, clouds form,
 Lightnings are loosened,
 Stars come and go. Let joy break with the storm,
 Peace let the dew send.
 Lofty designs must close in like effects:
 Loftily lying,
 Leave him—still loftier than the world suspects,
 Living and dying.'

He finished, his voice clear but resonant with emotion. His great spirit shone in his eyes. He closed the book, and sat there, venerable and lovable, with the light on his face."

Mrs. Wyatt Eaton tells of Louis Stevenson's

visit to the Sanborn cottage at Point Pleasant on the Manasquan in April, 1888, and pictures the author of *Treasure Island* and *The Merry Men* in the midst of a gay, convivial company, seating himself before the grate, the flickering light of the wood flames illuminating his thin, consumptive face to a vivid transparency. "Once or twice for a few moments he relapsed into silence, gazing into the fire with the rapt look of one who sees visions or dreams dreams." A lady broke his dreaming with "You look as though you saw salamanders, or are you thinking of the golden alchemy of Lescaris?" "Salamanders," he replied, smiling. "Yes, man-eating monsters that do away with him and his dreams forever."

What will go on in the mind of man or woman sitting before the fire seems wholly problematical. When Dr. Weelum Maclure sat thawing himself out that bitter December night in Drumtochty before Drumsheugh's blazing fire, with the gusty wind roaring in the chimney and dying away in a long moan across the fields, and the snow storm beating against the windows; and the two old men, both past seventy, sat in contented silence, "Drumsheugh gazed long into the red caverns on the hearth and saw former things."

Celia Thaxter on the Isles of Shoals, safe and cozy indoors, by the blaze of beach-gathered driftwood, hears the storm raging furiously, thinks of her tiny winged playmate of the day, the little

sandpiper, wonders where he will sleep to-night, remembers the sparrow's Caretaker, and cries to her flying comrade:

"I do not fear for thee, though wroth
The tempest rushes through the sky:
For are we not God's children both,
Thou, little sandpiper, and I?"

Once on a time, as a grizzled old man gazed dreamily into a bed of coals, there came to him out of the far hinterland of memory the vision of a woman rocking before the fire, crooning a hymn to her little boy, whose curly head lay lightly in "the good place God fashioned for it—the hollow 'twixt her bosom and her arm"; and the lonely old man felt as if the fire were mothering him.

Robert Browning's mother jealously kept for herself, as the dearest privilege of the day, a twilight hour of solitude and darkness and music; and the great poet all his long life remembered being held in his father's lap before the library fire and hearing his mother, sitting alone and without a light in the next room, singing familiar old hymns. She sang and prayed her own deeply religious temper and warm evangelical faith into her little boy, and in years when she was no more on earth her strong son said with grateful emotion, "She was a divine woman."

Eugene Field, alone by the fire, had the silence in which he was sitting changed into a vesper

service by the sound of his child's small voice in an adjoining room saying sweetly her "Now I lay me down to sleep." It sent him back to his own childhood, made him a child again kneeling at his mother's knee; and with tears in his eyes the world-worn man bowed his head on his breast and reverently repeated his earliest petition, "Now I lay me." The voice of history cries to all mothers as in God's name: "Sing hymns to your little children and teach them to pray." A certain general of the war for the Union found his mother's hymns singing in his head before the battle. One of his mother's hymns sung by a street missionary's little band helped to save wild Billy Sunday, reveling in bad company on the streets of Chicago. All the account Edison in "Who's Who" gives of his education is, "Received some instruction from his mother: at twelve years of age a newsboy on Grand Trunk Railway."

In Browning's "By the Fireside," Husband Robert sits watching his wife, with the fire-glow on her features and her curls—the "great brow and the spirit-small hand propping it." With the immortal faith and love which makes firesides holy, he says to his Elizabeth:

"Think, when our one soul understands
The great Word which makes all things new,
When earth breaks up and heaven expands,
How will the change strike me and you,
In the house not made with hands?"

Later on, in middle life, looking ahead to life's December, Browning sees himself, in anticipation, with the firelight on his gray hairs and wrinkled face:

"I shall be found by the fire, I suppose,
O'er a great book as beseemeth age,
While the shutters flap as the cross-wind blows,
And I turn the page and I turn the page;
Not verse then, only prose."

In London, on the last day of 1858, William J. Fox, aged seventy-three, comfortable in the warmth of his library fire, wrote to his daughter thus: "What an array of Christmases and New Years I look back upon! And in what a variety of situations and relations they found me! What a phantasmagoria of figures, if I could paint all the holiday dinners and people! All the first batch was cleared off long ago; the second generation have nearly all followed; and the third set is now on. I am making up my accounts, and I think it is time."

James Whitcomb Riley, on his fifty-ninth birthday, sits in his study by a crackling fire, surrounded by gift-flowers and messages from a host of friends, meditating on the fast-flying years and repeating to himself old Walter Savage Landor's lines:

"I warmed both hands before the fire of Life;
It sinks, and I am ready to depart."

To a friend who inquired after his health, John Hay replied: "I have an incurable disease."

"What is it?" asked the startled friend.

"Old age," answered the great diplomat, who at sixty-eight musing on the favored and enviable lot of those who, not living to be old, are remembered as forever young, wrote:

"At even, when the brief wintry day is sped,
I muse beside my fire's faint flickering glare—
Conscious of wrinkling face and whitening hair—
Of those who, dying young, inherited
The immortal youthfulness of the early dead.
I think of Raphael's grand-seigneurial air;
Of Shelley and Keats, with laurels fresh and fair
Shining unwithered on each sacred head;
And Soldier boys who snatched death's starry prize,
With sweet life radiant in their fearless eyes,
The dreams of love upon their beardless lips,
Bartering dull age for immortality;
Their memories hold in Death's unyielding fee
The youth that thrilled them to the finger tips."

In a Maryland mansion named Altodale, one of the noblest of Christian homes, hospitable to guests from every land, on a cool May evening, the open fire was semicircled by the family group plus three guests. After the conversation had flitted to and fro firefly fashion, sparkling like the burning logs for a while, a United States commissioner of education, later chancellor of New York University, recited by request to the hushed company, that exquisite and sacred fragment by Nathaniel J. Burton:

"Heaven is rest and joy, and it requires the heart to interpret that, and grasp its immeasurable meaning. O, when I am tired—when my

body is unstrung and my soul is jaded; when my hopes flag, and my ambitions flicker in their socket; when the night does not refresh me and the morning does not cheer me; when the song of birds is heavy music, and all the trees of the field seem chastened, and the brooks are weary and creep and gurgle and lament; when the beauty of women is vanity to my eyes, and I can see no dignity in the faces of men; when the friends of my youth are scattered and dead, and my eyes are evermore striving to look beyond to the distant horizon as for some country far away; when long-gone forms crowd my memory, the young, the old, the beautiful, the revered; when my sympathies are pensive and introspective, and I live with the dead whom I knew more than with the living whom I know; when the winds complain and sob at my casement all the day; when the love and the hate, and the efforts and delights of men seem small and empty—O, when I am tried and sad and worn out—I know what my God intended when he said, ‘Rest and joy in Heaven.’ Amen.”

A man, alone before the fire, may have to reckon with memory and conscience. A poet pictures Napoleon sitting gloomily alone before the fire, himself “dying like an untended watch-fire on Saint Helena,” and bids us guess whether that victim of unmerciful disaster, on his rock of exile, haunted by memories, thinks oftenest of the wreck of ambition or the loss of a woman’s

love—Waterloo or Josephine. Skinflint Scrooge, alone, the firelight on his flinty face, with its sharp nose, thin lips, and pointed chin, is haunted by his past. Old Marley was as dead as a doornail, and Scrooge knew he was dead, but that did not protect the miser. Suddenly Marley's ghost appeared. The unwelcome visitor came on through the heavy door and passed into the room before his eyes.

"How now? What do you want with me?" demanded Scrooge.

"Much," said the ghost. Not a pleasant visitor.

Thomas Hardy's cheerless and haunted mind laments

"That every hearth has a ghost, alack,
And can be but the scene of a bivouac
For a painful halt till the time to pack."

Some very strange reports are abroad as to what has been seen in the open fire. When Lewis Carroll's Alice, "Child of the pure, unclouded brow and dreaming eyes of wonder," got through the looking glass into the room behind it, the very first thing she did was to look whether there was a fireplace, and she was well pleased to find a real fire blazing brightly. She was much surprised to see queer little figures moving about on the hearth. Going down on her hands and knees to look close, she saw they were chessmen; the Red King and the Red Queen were walking about among the coal and cinders, while the

White King and the White Queen were sitting on the edge of the shovel, and the White Knight was amusing himself by sliding down the poker. It was before that strangely populated fire that little Alice read the fearsome tale of how

“The Jabberwock, with eyes of flame,
Came whiffing through the tulgey wood,
And burbled as it came”;

and how “the beamish boy” went out and smote it with his “vorpal blade”;

“One, two, one, two, and through and through
The vorpal blade went snicker-snack.
He left it dead, and with its head
He went galumphing back.”

Alice did not wonder at the welcome given to the slayer of the monster:

“And hast thou slain the Jabberwock?
Come to my arms, my beamish boy.
O frabjous day, Callooh, Callooy.
He chortled in his joy.”

Companionable and social is the open fire, as Burroughs said: “How it responds when you nudge it, and rejoices when you feed it.” A man stark alone in his city house on a cool evening in the early fall, his family still away in the country, went down cellar, broke up a packing box, and built a fire in the dining-room fireplace more for company than for warmth; found it a vivacious, sparkling, and entertaining companion; found that tending the fire is sufficient oc-

cupation to keep one from feeling that he belongs to the army of the unemployed; found that nursing a wood fire is the next thing to having a child to mind, enough to keep one busy and the moods and tenses of the one about as incalculable as those of the other. At bedtime this man went upstairs feeling that he had had a sociable and animated, as well as innocent and peaceful, evening. Dickens' Joe Gargery, who was "oncommon fond of reading," easily dispensed with company. "Give me a good book or a good newspaper," he said, "and set me down afore a good fire, and I ask no better."

"My son," says one of the characters in an English story, "a romance begins when two animated individuals can be silent for five minutes without either of them noticing it. It ends when both are afraid of silence and feel obliged to fill the minutes with conventional speech. Do you know enough about the mute communion of congenial souls to understand what I mean?" Between friendly souls an open fire may supersede the need of conversation. One raw, gray, gloomy day Tennyson dropped in on Carlyle; found him sitting solitary before the fire; without palaver dropped quietly into a chair beside him. There the two old men sat for an hour, gazing contentedly into the fire without speaking a word. When an hour had passed sociably, but in utter silence, Tennyson rose to go. Carlyle, without rising, reached up his hand and said simply and

sincerely, "Come again, Alfred, we've had a grand, good time." Their session was as free and amiable as a Quaker meeting or a meeting of "the Society of Silent Unity." Imagine how intolerably different it might have been if, instead of gazing together into the sociable open fire, they had sat staring at each other for an hour in silence. Such an interview would have seemed inane, if not morose; they might have been glaring at each other before the hour was ended. The friendly fire acted as intermediary and maintained the *entente cordiale*. The famous scene when Lord Palmerston and Russell "met, embraced, and hated each other worse than ever," did not transpire in the presence of a genial open fire. The Court of Arbitration in the Peace Palace at The Hague should transact its business (if it ever has any) in front of a great, big, kindly hearthfire.

The socializing influence of the open fire has been known to have a share in matrimonial results. The dictionary instructs us that the ardent participial noun, "sparking," is ambiguous and may relate to a fire or a lover, yet possibly to both, as when two middle-aged persons chanced to meet as guests in the same house and the family, retiring at the end of the evening, left them purring together by the open fire. Hours afterward, when that man and woman bade each other good night, they had formed a *Zwei-Bund*; they were pledged to each other for

life. The man, if he had lingered by the sinking fire with her "Good night" in his ears, might have repeated T. A. Daly's verse:

"Good night, and then your candle's feeble glare
Went glimmering up the stair;
A door closed, and the house was still.
The night grew old
And from the smoldering hearth the cold
Stole forth and laid its chill
On heart and brain that had been fain
To make a song of cheer.
For, O, the summer warm and bright
You conjured in the winter night
Went upward with your candlelight,
Went with you up the stair."

Friendly communion by the fire is warming to the cockles of the heart. Lionel Johnson, in a moment of revulsion from institutions and implements, realizing the potency and preciousness of human intercourse, and advocating the value of the living personal touch, cries: "O swimming baths and cookery classes, Botticellis and banjos, congresses and councils, what are you worth compared to a talk with a friend by the fire?" Sir Gilbert Parker keeps himself from loneliness by communing in thought with his friends:

"When blows the wind and drives the sleet,
And ice-clad trees bend down;
When all the world is chill'd 'tis meet
Good company be known;
And in my heart good company
Sits by the fire and sings to me.
The ingle-nook right warm shall be
Where my heart hath good company."

To his old friends, Whittier, in his "Snow Bound," sent this invitation:

"Come sit with me by the homestead hearth,
And stretch the hands of memory forth
To warm them at the wood-fire's blaze."

The wilder the weather the cheerier the fireside. When the snow is driving over the fields, and rough old Winter is blustering at the doors and rattling the windows, Emerson pictures the cozy comfort of the farmhouse inmates sitting "around the radiant fireplace, inclosed in a tumultuous privacy of storm." We all agree with Holland's "Kathrina" that

"The storm makes sweeter music to our huddled hearts
Than choirs of stars can sing on fairest nights."

Grim, glorious John Milton's sonnets say that sitting by the glowing hearth-fire in dreary winter weather may "help us waste a sullen day and gain what may be won from the hard season."

The fire on the hearth promotes a sociable and homelike feeling by the informal private musicales it gives with such quaint old-fashioned accompaniments as the kettle, the cricket, the pussy cat, and possibly the dog. The logs hum and hiss and whistle and warble; the kettle audibly boils and bubbles; the cricket chirps; pussy purrs; the sleeping house dog snores. Dickens opens his *Cricket on the Hearth* with "The kettle began it. . . . I say the kettle did. . . . The kettle

began it full five minutes by the little Dutch clock in the corner before the cricket uttered a chirp."

Saint-Saens, French composer and organist, showed, even in his cradle, exquisite sensitiveness to sounds. In advanced years he said that in his nurse's arms his "greatest pleasure was the symphony of the kettle on the hob." That soft bubbly shrilling of the kettle-spout has entree to the ear as natural as air has to the lungs. It is a strain of elemental music—water, fire and air simmering together—akin to the quiet tune sung to the sleeping woods all night by Coleridge's hidden brook; one with the tune to which Emerson heard the atoms marching. So Mother Nature was the nurse who held that French baby in her arms before the fire and gave him ecstasy to drink.

Now, as to the kettle, Dr. J. H. Jowett appears as its laureate in this passage in a sermon on "Thankfulness": "Practice singing among the simplicities. Sydney Smith, the great wit, once said: 'I gave a lady twenty-two recipes against melancholy.' I will quote three. (I am afraid this applies more to England than to here.) One was, a bright fire, another was to remember all the pleasant things said to her, and another, a kettle simmering on the hob. You don't know what that is, do you? It is one of the pleasantest sounds in the peasant's cot. Let me be very intimate with you for a moment. I remember in

my mother's home, away in a little house in the West Riding of Yorkshire, in England, I can see the kettle when the water is boiled, laid on the side-on the hob. I can hear it singing; and there is a contented, containing sound about it which it contributes to the whole atmosphere. A singing kettle is a very welcome thing about my old home. And Sydney Smith said to the melancholy woman in his recipes, 'Have a simmering kettle on the hob.' A trifle. A tremendous trifle. A simplicity, a commonplace. But the witty dean meant that just listening to such things makes the simple music of the simple life. Open your ears; receive them, and the singing kettle may help you to sing. If I may paraphrase my Master, I would say, 'He that is grateful in that which is least shall be grateful also in much,' and if he will be grateful for the sound of the simmering kettle, he will shortly be grateful for the song of the angels which bring good news to him. Practice it, and you will succeed. 'In everything give thanks.' "

As for that shy, plaintive, reticent, tiny jongleur of the fireside, the cricket—is he really chirping anywhere nowadays outside of Dickens' books? When a city man, retired from business, talks in rhyme to "An obscure poet who lives on my hearth," we leniently concede the possibility of a hearth and an open fire in a city dwelling; but we doubt the existence of that cricket outside the rhymester's imagination. No self-respect-

ing cricket would consent to reside in New York city, unless in some very old mansion mysteriously spared and soon to be torn down.

As for the cat, a current short story poses kitty very naturally before the fire in this pleasing picture: "A wood fire was flickering in the square, old-fashioned, red fireplace, held up by straddling andirons and fenced in by a glittering brass fender. Before the fender, in the center of the neatly swept hearth, sat a small gray kitten, her tail curled about her, her little ears daintily pricked, her little feet demurely together, watching with the wide eyes of kittenhood the slowly rising smoke. The room was still; there was no one near; only the diminutive gray kitten composedly surveying the gently crackling flames in the deep fireplace—surely an exquisite picture of contentment and tranquillity." To properly complete that homelike scene, other homely and familiar furnishings—the poker and shovel and tongs and turkey-wing hearth-sweeper, dearer to memory than bric-a-brac and parlor ornaments—should be added to andirons and fender.

A description of the library of Francis Parkman says: "Up in that study he used to sit all the winter months in the company of his books and manuscripts, while the fire from the open stove flickered salutations to the shelves opposite." As to that "open stove," A. H. Joline properly remarked that "it grates a little on our

nerves. No library or sitting room is perfect without an *open* fire, stoveless be it understood, a fire on the hearth, with a fat, comfortable cat who will purr on pressure," or, we add, an amiable, outstretched dog, offering his well-cushioned ribs as a foot-rest for the sitter in front of the fire. A stove robs a room of its poetry. "Poetry," George Meredith said, "is compounded of form and fire." Kipling performed a masterly miracle in tuning McAndrew's engines to a mighty chant of praise, but not even Kipling could make poetry out of stoves, or hot-air registers, or steam-radiators, or gas-logs. But an open fire is a poem of subtle elemental fascination, writ in lambent lines of flame. It is a spectacle, an entertainment, a moving-picture show, a vision which "decomposes but to recompose," a song without words, a piece of woodland music improvised by some invisible dryad. "When old Robert draws the backbrand in, the green logs steam and spit," and we listen to one of Nature's lyrics in

"The crooning of the blithe wood-flame—
A single bar of music fraught
With cheerful, yet half pensive thought—
A thought elusive; out of reach,
Yet trembling on the verge of speech."

An odoriferous delight also is the open fire when the right sort of wood is burning.

"The oozing pine logs flame and flare,
Wafting the perfume of their native woods";

and in the wood-smell is some opiate vapor which gives delicious dreams without somnolence. Spruce, which is fragrant with resinous aroma, is also the liveliest of woods, often making a miniature Fourth of July on the hearth, with its snapping and crackling and popping fireworks.

Magical, brilliant, and various are the effects and exploits of the open fire. It fastens its fascinations on the new-born baby and the white-haired grandsire. One young mother hoped that when the earliest intelligent gaze, the first really attentive and seeing look, should come into her first-born's face, it might fix itself on her own face. One evening when she was rocking him in her lap before the fire, a burning log broke and fell with a great burst of sparks, startling the baby. Then for the first time the soul peeped out in what seemed a perceiving look of wonder and delight. The eager mother, who had waited for the coming of that look of awareness, put her jealous face nearer his to appropriate that look to herself, but the little face turned from her kiss; the fascinated infant eyes were held by the burst of sparks at which he gazed and smiled. Happily unaware he was that "man is born to trouble as the sparks fly upward." The open fire which fixed the baby's gaze talked articulately as with lambent tongues of flame to the young mother's gray-haired father, whose easy-chair was next to her low rocker. Watching the fiery fountain that spirted upward from the fallen

log, he meditated on Job's saying that, as surely as "the sparks, the children of the burning coals, lift up to fly," so surely is man's lot a troubled one. Seeing on the wall behind them the wavering shadows of three generations, the old man's experienced and sober mind recalled the saying of Edmund Burke, "What shadows we are and what shadows we pursue!"—an exclamation uttered when the great Irish statesman and orator, mourning the loss of his son, felt that he would not, in that desolate hour, "give a peck of spoiled wheat for all the empty honors of the world." That passage in Job about the upflying sparks had its meaning altered and improved by a Bible-wise English cobbler, whose fine spiritual insight, by simply changing the place of the period, made it read: "Man is born to trouble. (Therefore) as the sparks fly upward I would seek unto God and unto God would I commit my cause." If only all higher critics were as intelligent and useful as that pious country shoemaker! John Oxenham's verses on the "Sacrament of Fire" are not out of place here:

"Kneel always when you light a fire!
 Kneel reverently, and thankful be
 For God's unfailing charity,
 And on the ascending flame inspire
 A little prayer, that shall upbear
 The incense of your thankfulness
 For this sweet grace
 Of warmth and light!
 For here again is sacrifice
 For your delight.

"Within the wood,
That lived a joyous life
Through sunny days and rainy days
And winter storms and strife;
Within the coal,
Where forests lie entombed,—
Oak, elm, and chestnut, beech, and red
 pine bole;
God shrined his sunshine, and enwombed
For you these stores of light and heat,
Your life-joys to complete.
These all have died that you might live;
Yours now the high prerogative
To loose their long captivities,
And through these new activities
A wider life to give.

"Kneel always when you light a fire!
Kneel reverently,
And grateful be
For God's unfailing charity!"

"Around our habitation be Thou a wall of light" is the inscription on the terra-cotta chimney piece above the fireplace in the central hall of the Pine Tree Inn at Lakehurst, where, in fact, this idyll of the open fire started. Those words from an old hymn are possibly an echo of the divine promise of protection given the Holy City in Zechariah's time: "I will be unto her a wall of fire round about." . . . On the façade of the twenty-seventh psalm, that temple of peace, are chiseled and gilded these words of quietness and assurance: "The Lord is my light and my salvation."

The Lady of Hollyhock House at Oneida,

N. Y., thinks a good fireplace inscription to focus the attention of the house upon would be the revised text of a verse in the thirty-seventh psalm: "Fret not—it tendeth only to evil-doing."

On the frozen body of a missionary to the far north a bit of paper was found on which his numbed fingers had written, in triumph of spirit over flesh, "It is not cold where Christ is." One Christian missionary home inscribed in letters of gold above the radiant light and warmth of its open fire that agraphon of Jesus preserved by Origen: "He who is near Me is near the fire."

VISIBLE VALUES IN ROBERT BROWNING

THIS is not a literary criticism from a college chair of English literature, but an estimate of values from the standpoint of practical life; no academic discussion, but a report of one man's experience with Browning while harnessed to the load of daily labor, in touch with human nature and human needs, as known and felt in actual life. No fair survey of English literature in the Victorian age can fail to recognize Robert Browning as one of the most potent intellectual and religious forces of his time; and no liberally educated person can afford to be unacquainted with the products of his genius. We submit a few reasons which make it profitable to cultivate acquaintance with this poet.

I. If anybody wants initial mental impulse to set his mind going, Browning furnishes it. Thackeray said that he wrote when he sat down to write; that as soon as he got his nose to the desk his ideas came. When G. H. Lewes was telling Huxley that he never had any difficulty in getting into the full swing of composition, saying: "I never hesitate. I get up steam at once. In short, I boil at a low temperature"; Huxley, whose experience was different, said, "But that implies a vacuum in the upper re-

gions." Dr. Charles H. Parkhurst says his mind rarely starts until he has a pen between his fingers and a drop of ink on the point of it. Most of us will agree that he is fortunate beyond the ordinary whose mind always makes a prompt start then. Most writers sometimes find it necessary to set the mental machinery in motion by a borrowed impulse. The mind occasionally needs arousing: "How do you wake up your mind and start it on its best creative action," is a question often asked among intellectual workers, and answered variously. One replies, "I take up Shakespeare"; another, "I run through a few tough propositions in geometry"; another, "I read a chapter in Job or Romans"; another, "I touch up my brains and sensibilities with Robertson or Bushnell, or Phillips Brooks." Beecher said, "When my thoughts hesitate, I pick up a suggestive book and read until my mind takes fire and gives out sparks of its own." Professor Austin Phelps knew one young preacher who found La Place's *Mécanique Céleste* to be most effective in awakening his mind to original production. A critic, discussing Emerson's talks with a college boy about the art of writing, says: "The outcome of Emerson's precepts is this—to see clearly and state lucidly, which is what not one writer in five hundred can do. And not one in five million can add to clearness of thought and lucidity of expression that electric force which stirs the reader himself to creative effort.

Emerson has it, and a greater than he—Shakespeare.” To these we unhesitatingly add a third, Robert Browning, whose nearest kin in quality among American minds is Emerson, and whose only brother among British poets is Shakespeare. And we say that for contagious kindling, for intellectual arousement, for imparting initial impulse, there is nothing better than Browning’s best. If the mental machinery will not start up when the morning whistle blows for opening the mill, just belt the running gear over onto his shafting, and get propelling power for a start until your own slow furnace fires give you a sufficient head of steam to make your engines do their work.

II. If anybody cares for intellectual athletics, this poet provides a large amount of strenuous mental exercise. The Browning literature is a gymnasium for the mind. Now, poetry as a means of thorough mental discipline will doubtless be a novel thought to those whose habit has been to regard it only as a relaxation; but whoever makes only such luxurious use of poetry must let the Browning shelf alone. He himself said, “I never pretended to offer such literature as should be a substitute for a cigar or a game of dominoes to an idle man.” The works of Browning are not easy reading suitable for leisure’s recreation. Nowhere in prose or poetry is your whole complex nature more put upon its mettle, piqued and challenged, summoned to responsive action, dared to

do its mightiest and keenest on problems, puzzles, subtleties, profundities—the mysteries of nature, life, and destiny. In no poet, unless it be Shakespeare, is mental tension so sustained and exacted. And if anyone wants a powerful and stinging stimulus, a tingling exhilaration to tighten every faculty up to its strenuous best, he may find it almost anywhere between “Pauline,” published in 1833, and “Asolando,” 1889.

The popular complaint lodged against Browning by people who decline to study him, is that he is inexcusably difficult because unnecessarily obscure. Charles Dickens said of Browning’s early work, “I have read the thing forward and can make no sense of it; I have tried it backward and that is no better.” When Wordsworth was told that Elizabeth Barrett had married Robert Browning he said of these rivals of his, “It’s a good thing the two understand each other, for no one else understands them.” Carlyle, while declaring Browning’s excerpt from the *Alkestis* of Euripides to be the best translation of its kind he had ever seen, exclaimed to William Allingham concerning Browning’s “*Agamemnon*”: “O bless me! Can you understand it at all? I went carefully over some parts of it, and for my soul’s salvation could not make out the meaning.” A Boston University professor once overheard two Browningites:

“Have you read Browning’s last book?”

“No, have you?”

"Yes, I've been reading it all the morning."

"Well, how do you like it?"

"O, it's one of those things, you know, that you can't understand; but then, of course, it's glorious."

Chesterton, referring to Browning's superb optimism, says that when he praises God he wants all men and beasts and fishes and flying creatures to take part in the applauding chorus of the cosmos; but that sometimes he praises in such a way that God alone could possibly understand the praise. Certain it is that some readers who broke into Browning at the wrong place, beginning, say, with "Sordello," instead of with "Hervé Riel" or "The Flight of the Duchess," or "Evelyn Hope," or "Pippa Passes," understood what they read no more than the geese understood Schopenhauer :

"See them un-der-neath the tree
Gath-er round the goose-girl's knee,
While she reads them by the hour
From the works of Scho-pen-hau-er.

"How pa-tient-ly the geese at-tend!
But do they re-al-ly comprehend
What Scho-pen-hau-er's driv-ing at?
Oh, not at all; but what of that?
Nei-ther do I; nei-ther does she;
And, for that mat-ter, nei-ther does he."

Lowell said he'd give his copy of "Sordello" to anyone who'd lay his hand on his heart and declare that he understood the poem; though W. H.

Channing asserted that "Sordello" only needed full and proper punctuation to be perfectly plain.

All manner of ridicule has been directed at the Browning societies, the prime principle of which, according to Arlo Bates, is that a poem of Browning's is a sort of prize rebus or conundrum to be guessed, and the club is a syndicate of brains organized for the purpose of mining the deeply buried ore of thought and smelting out the meaning.

When the Inter-State Commerce Bill was enacted by Congress a sarcastic wag suggested that the puzzled railroad companies send it to Browning and have him put it into poetry in order to make it more lucid. This intimation that the bill was more obscure than Browning's poetry was evidently considered the utmost possible severity of sarcasm.

The fun that has been poked at Browning and his admirers would fill a volume. Many think of them about as a musician wrote of Wagner and his admirers: "Wagner is the king of musical cranks, and most of his disciples commit suicide or go to the lunatic asylum in their attempts to solve the infinite." A New York daily perpetrated the following squib: "We understand that the Grand Jury of Suffolk County, Massachusetts, has found a true bill against the desperado who snickered at a Browning reading the other day. We conceal this person's name out of respect to his relatives. At the same time we would

appeal to the excited Bostonians not to smirch the glory of the Cyamophagus Capitol by lynching this misguided offender. Let him die by the law and not by an act of violence almost equal to his own." Browning often relished such jokes on himself. He once received an envelope from America addressed simply to Robert Browning, Poet, England. This was what it contained:

"O Robert B.,
Cannot you see
You are at times
Too mixed for me?
Drop it! if I may make so free."

Browning laughed over it heartily, and a year afterward was heard repeating it with great delight.

It strikes William Law Symonds as surprising that "two of the simplest of modern writers, Emerson and Browning, should be so frequently deemed obscure." But others besides them have been accused of being obscure. The great American mathematician, Dr. Bowditch, translator of La Place's *Mécanique Céleste*, confessed that whenever he came to a place where La Place said, "Whence it plainly appears," he knew that he was in for an hour or two of hard toil in trying to discover *how* it plainly appeared. Is there any among the greatest thinkers who has escaped being taxed with obscurity? Archbishop Trench says: "Shakespeare's sonnets are so heavily loaded with meaning, so doubled-shotted with thought,

that, packed as all this is into narrow limits, it sometimes imparts no little obscurity to them." And Sidney Lanier, in his poem, "The Crystal," chides and forgives Shakespeare for "Fatigues most drear, and needless overtax of speech obscure that had as lief be plain"; at the same time that he also pardons old Father Homer for his "drear harangues that tease the patience of the centuries." Professor Boyesen, though he put Browning as a poet below Keats and Shelley and Tennyson, as all do who value form above substance, yet said that his obscurity is not from confusion of thought but from overfullness. It is opulence, not obfuscation. Browning once told his critics that if they had to put in one small line—cut short, perhaps by metrical necessities—some thought big and bouncing, they would comprehend one reason of his obscurity; which recalls a confession of Horace, "*Brevis esse laboro, obscurus fio*" ("In laboring to be concise I become obscure").

Now there is no doubt that Browning meant to be intelligible. An artist tells us that in his London studio, the poet said one day, "Anybody who honestly tries can understand my poetry." Once when a friend asked him what was the precise idea in a certain passage of his poetry the poet read it over and replied, "Really I cannot now tell, but I believe it will be worth your while to keep on studying it." That was the sober saying of a greatly modest man who meant

to write no line that was not full of thought. When Dr. Murray was at work on the Philological Society's new dictionary he wrote Browning as to the exact meaning he had intended to give to certain words in a passage of his writings. The poet answered: "Don't know what I meant; ask the Browning Society." But Coleridge said of one of his own passages: "These are very fine lines, though I say it that should not, but hang me if I know the meaning of them, though my own composition." When Lord Francis Egerton wrote to Goethe for an explanation of a passage in "Faust" which puzzled him, the poet replied: "I am at a loss as to the meaning. Surely you at twenty-four should know better than I at seventy-four the meaning of a passage I wrote when I was your age."

Many years of experience with Browning has brought at least one student to trust him absolutely as a sure-footed thinker who always keeps his way, even in dark depths or on dizzy heights, always means something and knows what he means, never is without a *terminus a quo* and a *terminus ad quem*. The reader's task is to follow him, which it must be admitted is no more like a holiday excursion than climbing the Matterhorn or the Jungfrau or following Stanley through Africa: but it pays. The reason why Browning clubs persist, survive, and multiply, is that their labor is not unrewarded. Edmund Gosse, contrasting our two greatest modern

poets, says : "Tennyson lies in his floral pomp and bloom, like a billowy Vale of Tempe. The youngest reader, who reads at all, may descend into his flowery dells and find some gates unbarred and open fields of daisies. But Browning stands like a long, rocky island with beetling crags on every side ; we must choose a calm day, and creep around him in a boat, searching for an accessible cove or sandy islet, from whence to climb into his altitudes." But the climb pays.

Not a little of Browning's alleged obscurity is due to the nature of the subjects handled, for he is a poet of spiritual things, which are susceptible only of intimation and adumbration, not of exact scientific statement. The contents of man's soul cannot be inventoried with precision and completeness. The supernatural does not wholly submit itself to terms. The infinite can be suggested, recognized, and responded to, but not formulated. All sublimest and profoundest realities are indescribable ; the measuring-line of language cannot be carried over or under or around them. When the spirit-world communicates directly with us, is it in words and sentences ? The admonitions of conscience are inarticulate, yet none the less forceful, intelligible, and convincing. Of them our poet himself says, "God's intimations rather fail in clearness than in energy." Is it claimed that the witness of the Spirit speaks English or uses words, or only that it produces persuasion ? Charles Lamb's "Dream Children,"

faintly seen and vanishing in his reverie, "without speech strangely impressed upon him the effects of speech." We know of nothing that inspires awe, reverence or any of the nobler emotions, but transcends description and cannot be clearly diagramed. In such things an attempt at exact description often belittles and degrades. Milton's wisdom appears in his shadowy picture of Lucifer: "What seemed his head the likeness of a kingly crown had on." How different this from the style of the society Jenkins describing for the local newspaper how the bride was dressed. Even in physical nature that which affects us most is not definitely explicable. At Table Rock, Niagara, we cannot name the elements which subdue us; our joints are unloosed, our reins tremble, and we are dazed in all our senses by the thunder of an unsyllabled voice, the yawning of an unmeasured abyss, the sweep and swirl of waters concealed by foam, the vast gulf obscure with explosive bursts of mist, the fury of vague and awful forces. We are crowded to our knees with blanched faces by the indefinable. Experience shows us to be so constituted that, if only there be an indubitable reality, vagueness of revelation may be more suggestive of greatness than distinctness is.

Even a visible and measurable fact often gains in impressiveness when given by a flash of instantaneous suggestion rather than by slow detailed description.

It is more impressive to see in the premature twilight of summer woods, when the sun is at its western submergence, some great nightbird tumble heavily from somewhere in the tree-tops and slide softly down a sagging curve under gnarled oak limbs, sudden, swift, silent, large, and vague through the dim forest-dusk, and up again with clumsy ease to some new perch invisible beyond, among thick, leafy branches in dark shadows of the deepening evening, than to look on that same owl, shut in a wooden cage on the end of a counter in the country store, blinking at daylight glare, discussed by loungers and plagued by teasing boys, although and because in the first case you cannot describe nor even clearly perceive the creature, while in the other case you can minutely inspect beak, talons, wings, and tail, eyes, eyelids, and curious ears.

But our present point is that Browning's so-called obscurity, whatever its cause, is an effective mental discipline to his readers, who have rare exercise in rapid action, in analysis, and in following subtle threads of thought. His omissions compel the mind to a quick supplying of much that is understood but not uttered. He requires a degree of attention and alertness which shall be equal to catching instantly the smallest hint, interpreting a mental glance, understanding the meaning of every intonation and inflection; sometimes it is like reading the flash-signals of a heliograph in a military campaign,

or the dots and dashes of telegraphy; one needs an impressibility so sensitive as to take clearly an instantaneous photograph of a flying thought which the author does not present nor capture in his language-net, but only points at with an abrupt exclamation which says, "Look, there it goes!" If the reader did not catch sight of it as it flashed past, he has missed connections, and the author is immediately unintelligible to him and is accused of writing incoherent, senseless jargon. Many times the reader is relied upon to supply the interspatial and perceive the underlying; his mind must fly at such a height and be so eagle-eyed as to see below the surface the outline of what underlies, like submarine valleys sloping between the jutting coral islands that dot a tropic sea and mark the direction of the long reef's sharp spine. Often the reader is expected to complete what the poet merely suggests, as he himself says in "Sordello": "What I leave bare yourselves can now invest."

All this is a drill in mental promptitude, suppleness, acuteness, and agility, which may be variously useful. For example, the rapid and intelligent comprehension of many parts of Scripture requires the mind to supply what lies implied but unformulated between the lines. The Bible is not an easy volume with all its meaning lying on the surface. It is not a pavement, but a quarry. It is a merchant-ship with more of its freight under hatches than on deck; the

mere surface-reader cannot understand it. The thorough Bible student must go below; must dive and blast and fetch up. If the reader cannot see what is in the depths and gather up the necessary underlying relations between statements and sentences as he goes, he will not grasp the copious and profound truth; and the Greatest of books will seem obscure and unintelligible.

So too our poet's propensity for circuitous digressions and long and frequent parentheses which so offends and irritates the indolent reader or mere word-musician, affords to the studious a mental practice in clue-keeping through labyrinthine involutions, in returning safe from all excursions, and in holding steadily to the subject's fixed center while thought swings round its orbit by cycles and epicycles. And this is drill for Scripture-study. What about Paul's Epistles? Are there any prolix and involved sentences there, with parentheses and multiplicity of clauses—there and elsewhere? Equally in the study of another volume, that testament which is ever both old and new, entitled Human Nature and Life, as much truth lies in relationships as in facts; given facts, one must look between and underneath, or nothing is coherent and intelligible. In searching human motives and in interpreting action there is urgent need for the power to discern subways and keep buried connections, for the spiderlike faculty to swing across chasms and carry the thread. A long

jump is sometimes required of the mind. This saltatory effort Browning trains for.

III. We cannot help noting also that there is training for public speakers or writers in the psychologic monologue so much used by Browning; which is not a soliloquy but a colloquy carried on with an implied listener and questioner. The preacher's thinking for the pulpit is of this same sort. He discourses to and reasons with an imagined mind, and must formulate to himself as he goes its probable or possible comments and questions. He must make his utterances fit the attitude and meet the action of the silent auditor and interlocutor, with whose unvoiced thoughts he really holds a dialogue. The habit of anticipating the listener's responses and fencing with them, which is so constant in Browning, is calculated to give to sermonizing a sprightly alertness which must preclude dullness, and to impart to preaching the aptness and vivid interest of animated conversation; so relieving the audience of what our poet himself calls "The pig-of-lead-like pressure of the preaching-man's immense stupidity."

IV. If anybody cares to learn the art of putting enormous force into a few words—the knack of making language dense with meaning—Robert Browning has no superior in the art of terse, trenchant, telling speech. "Ah, the sense, the weighty sense," is often the reader's admiring exclamation. Sometimes a sentence of his is a

bale of goods packed by a hydraulic press, or a trip-hammer, ponderous, quick, and crushing, or a sharp lancet, or a needle-gun, firing its compact meaning straight to the mark, or a hand-grenade, small, but explosive. The minister addressing drowsy audiences of work-wearied men and habitual churchgoers blasé with much preaching, need the power of percussive and concussive speech. If preaching be made too velvety, saccharine, and mellifluous, there is danger lest some literary auditor familiar with Gray's *Elegy* shall find a paraphrase floating dreamily through his mind as the subtle poison of soft cushions takes effect and his heavy eyelids droop ;

Now fades yon pulpit like a glimmering landscape on my sight,
 And all the air a solemn stillness holds,
 Save that the beetle-headed preacher wheels his droning flight,
 And the sermon's drowsy tinklings lull the sleepy fold.

At such moments there is need of something like "the cock's shrill clarion or the echoing horn" to rouse those "rude forefathers in their narrow" pews; and it were well if the preacher knew how in an emergency to reach for the trump that is to wake the dead. And we say that for rifle-crack, trumpet-blast sentences, for what some one calls "the saber-cuts of speech," for mighty rugged dynamitic language, Robert Browning is often a masterly instructor, teaching by example.

V. Another of Browning's values lies in the

subjects he selects, examines, and expounds and the way in which he treats them. No poet so constantly fills his foreground with spiritual realities and verities. So true is this that some have characterized him as more a preacher than a poet. Birrell says, "Browning has more theology than most bishops." He is a prophet of the highest world; not only a master-singer but a spiritual seer. The *Atlantic Monthly* justly calls him an acknowledged master in spiritual matters. Dr. Johnson was wrong in his assertion in the *Life of Waller* that spiritual themes are not fit subjects for poetry; and Professor Corson was right in saying that spirituality, whether of theme or treatment, constitutes the real life of poetry.

Browning makes his readers familiar with the action of moral forces, shows the transcendent significance and effect of casual affairs, and backgrounds all earthly things with the infinite beyond. He is the great asserter of the soul, affirming the trustworthiness of its intuitions, the authority of the inward monitor, the sanctity of the light which lighteth every man that cometh into the world, the reasonableness of reverence and trust, the certainty that Love and Power are coequal in the Godhead, the divinely prophetic character of our highest cravings.

It is probably true, as one asserts, that he has never been the poet of the fashionable classes, being too remote from their indolent, butterfly world. A nearer neighbor to them is Oscar Wilde,

or the curled Adonis one sees in the Countess Guiccioli's portrait of her paramour. Browning is no boudoir singer, no matinee melodist, no "Point Lace and Diamonds" versifier. His admirers have come, rather, from the sober thinking masses, and, as has been said, "There is a class of readers neither literary nor smart who found in him something they wanted, and, who for the sake of the kernel, were willing to prick their fingers with the husk or bruise their joints over the shell. They are people to whom the problems of life are everything, and what drew them to him was his penetration and power in handling those problems." They acknowledge with gratitude as deep as the human heart, that through this man God has blessed them indeed and enlarged their coasts.

Whether Browning's poetry lies close to fact, swims in reality, is woven of substance, and helps flesh-and-blood humanity in its grapple with actual life, judge from these words spoken to a friend by Father Huntington when he was toiling in New York city, in the slums of the East Side, to "make low natures better" by his pains: "I get little time for reading; but with my Bible and my Browning I can keep mind and soul alive." He counts Browning a working factor for the spiritual redemption of the world, for the regeneration of souls, and the edification of character.

Robert Browning is no worshiper of institu-

tions, dignities, trappings, pomps, or prerogatives, but is possessed with the idea of The Supreme Worth of the Human Individual. He believed with Bulwer-Lytton that "the soul of one man is of more account than the vicissitudes of this whole physical globe."

His portrayal of external nature is with a master's eye, and a marvelously firm, swift, accurate stroke; he even confesses to many a thrill of kinship with the powers called nature; but his love and devotion are not for nature—they are for mankind. He does not "send his soul along with the cloud's thunder or the dove's brood-song," but with the intense throbbing life of struggling, tempted, and aspiring men. In the dedication of "Sordello" he wrote: "My stress lay on the incidents in the development of a soul; little else is worth study; I at least always thought so." His stress is not on circumstances, situations, externalities but on the inward world. In the swift rush of happenings, through all the thick of doing and suffering, interest centers in the living man. What is it that "Paracelsus," "Luria," and "Sordello" are working out? In each case, "The Tragedy of a Soul." Whatever the shifting of scenes, changing of costumes, entrance and exit of persons, this is the drama that is always on, with powerful presentation, vivid realism, and human interest at the maximum,—the soul's proof and prowess and progress. An unsurpassed demonstrator in spiritual anatomy is

Browning, a moral vivisectionist, a keen dissector of character and analyzer of motives. See, for example, "Sludge, the Medium," "Bishop Blougram's Apology," "Prince Hohenstiel Schwan-gau, Savior of Society," "Ned Bratts," "Ivan Ivanovitch," or "Little Pippa" and contrasted personages in the poem which Edmund C. Stedman and Edmund Gosse consider his most original and perfect masterpiece; and especially the characters in that *magnum opus*, "The Ring and the Book," a poem two thousand lines longer than Homer's "Iliad"; in which Caponsacchi, the priest, is called by some his most remarkable character-study, as Pompilia is, by many, reckoned the loveliest woman to be found anywhere in poetry, if not in all literature.

Art no more commands Browning's supreme interest than does nature. Art he knows, and must himself be classed among great artists; yet is he a teacher not in the school of art but in the university of life in which art is but an episode. *Æsthetics* do not rule him. Man is more than marbles, melodies, jewels, canvases, flowers, landscapes, graces, forms. He was always defiantly indifferent to the censure visited upon him for his disregard of form. And, really, the occasional abrupt rugged harshness of his verse is a vice which, in him, leans to virtue's side. Partly it is the leaping vigor of the thought which makes this ruggedness. A gentle sluggish stream will flow in smooth straightness or in graceful curves;

a torrent will cut out a rough channel, often angular and ragged with protruding rocks. But more largely it is because Browning is so sturdily in earnest that whenever the question arises whether the idea shall dominate the form or the needs of smooth versification shall be allowed to modify the idea, he always looks after the interests of the idea first. In this he is like Dante, who said: "Never a rime led me to say other than I meant." This the thinker and the moralist will approve while the musician and the modist find fault. Herder was right in declaring that decadence is nigh whenever poetry and literature become merely or mainly affairs of form.

Carlyle, whose prose was as jagged as forked lightning, thought poetry should be a song. Those who complain that Browning is unmelodious and afflicts them with eccentricities, broken harmonies, and sharp discords, should be asked whether finer song is anywhere to be found than in his sweetest verses. In his volume, "Fifine at the Fair," take the Prologue, that wonderful soliloquy of the swimmer with naught between him and the sky save a butterfly with whom he comrades, as Celia Thaxter did with the little sandpiper on the beach. Take that dainty and delicious morsel entitled "My Star," or the exquisite bit beginning "Never the time and the place and the loved one all together," or "Such a starved bank of moss," which preludes "The Two Poets of Croisic." If it is believed that any poet

of the century could touch the harp more deftly than his strong fingers when he pleased to perfect music as was ever sounded from Apollo's lute, then read from "Paracelsus,"

"Over the sea our galleys went
With cleaving prows in order brave,
To a speeding wind and a bounding wave,
A gallant armament."

The very surge and swing of the waves is in those lines. Read the "Cavalier Tunes," perfect in ring and rhythm, with the regular clatter of hoofs and jingle of scabbard and spur. For lightsome rhythmical movement, metrical sweep and swing, magnificent rolling verse, he is as remarkable as for powerful conciseness, bright and rapid narrative, and flashing suggestiveness. When his verse runs rugged it is not that the author of "Abt Vogler" hath no music in his soul, no ear for concord of sweet sounds, but that he cares more for higher things. Always the ethical and spiritual are more to him than the physical, the sensational and the artistic.

VI. Browning's robust masculinity is for many one of his notable values. This quality is the more prized from being so often lacking among poets, and, for that matter, in other places where it is highly desirable. The Rev. Sydney Smith said, "There are three sexes, men, women, and clergymen," and in one line of the "Ring and the Book" crafty old Violante says to Pom-

pilia: "A priest is more a woman than a man"; which may have been true, for aught we know, of sexless monks and the frocked clergy of the Papal Church; but Protestantism has no use for the androgynous feminine male; it wants the bone, and brawn, and sinew of manliness. Protestantism began in burly enough fashion with Luther, and it needs men so manly in quality and bearing, so muscular in thought and speech, so stalwart and hirsute in sentiment and action, as that their manhood shall be obvious and demonstrative.

In Browning one encounters the indubitable masculinity of a mind as virile as it is virtuous. The effeminate find nothing congenial in him. The ladylike æsthete quickly tires of an attempt to wrestle with the rugged thoughts. This thinker has the right arm of a blacksmith and the grip of a giant. In all his utterances we know with our eyes shut it is a bearded mouth that speaks and a man's voice that we hear. In Tennyson's earlier years Lord Lytton named him "Miss Alfred." No one ever dreamed of such an epithet for Browning.

He has tenderness most delicate and exquisite, but it is the tenderness of Sir Philip Sidney, or of Cromwell, or Wellington, or Abraham Lincoln. It is tenderness that never drivels or whimpers, tenderness that melts behind firm barriers, looks out from the embrasures of strength, and is seen like a child's face at the porthole of a man-of-

war. James Russell Lowell said that Browning's chief characteristic is strength; and we believe that a fair verdict will call him the most powerful thinker that has used the forms of poetry since Holy Trinity Church, in Stratford village on Avon's bank, received the bones which posterity is so sternly forbidden to disturb. That Browning has the magnificent gift of power is undeniable by his bitterest critics, and as Clive's friend in the poem says, "Power is power, my boy, and still marks a man." For his rugged daring and Titanic force, Augustine Birrell calls Browning "the Danton of modern poetry." Landor long ago wrote of him :

"Since Chaucer was alive and hale,
No man hath walkt along our roads with step
So active, so inquiring eye, or tongue
So varied in discourse."

One calls him a tawny lion crouched on Parnassus' Slope; and a critic in the *British Quarterly* says that Browning's work attests the tread of the firmest and surest foot that has waked the echoes from the difficult places of poetry and life since the early morning of English literature. So early as 1833, when Henry F. Chorley read extracts from Browning's "Pauline," he recognized "the print of a *man's* foot in the sand."

VII. Browning's fairmindedness toward humanity and life and the universe is worth something. He gives us lessons in doing justly and

loving mercy by practicing and requiring a judicial fairness toward all sorts and conditions of men. He compels a patient consideration of all sides in every case. He constitutes the reader into a court where, before the full bench of human faculties, causes and cases are laboriously heard and weighed. He requires of us, sitting on the judgment seat of life, a decision clearly just, or else suspension of sentence over the outcome of the complicated tangle of human motives; seeing that, as in the best there is something guilty, and in the greatest there is something weak, so also in the erring and the vicious there may be something good. He sets forth actual depravity, but affirms the possible saintliness of humanity. In "Gold-Hair, a Story of Pornic," he says to those who surmise that the Christian faith may be false, "I still see reasons to suppose it true; this, to begin with, 'Tis the faith that teaches original sin, the corruption of man's heart"; true to the facts. In "Pippa Passes" he shows us, foiled against the sweet and songful innocence of Pippa, the possibility of an unmitigated villain in Bluphocks; but everywhere he handles individualities and actions with grave respect and deals with all fairly and hopefully. He gives the accused the benefit of the most skillful advocacy in stating his case, and condemns only after impartial hearing. Yet he is as well a prophet of the judgment day. There is no maudlin tenderness preventing a firm announcement

of the stern and equitable verdict. He gives us awful glimpses of divine government and the retributions of a moral law able to enforce itself. The code which Browning's court administers is God's code. As we read that powerful North Country story, "Halbert and Hob," we have to say with the French hospital visitor, who was looking at the physical effects of vice seen in some of the sufferers on the cots, "God Almighty writes a very plain hand." Again and again, in Browning's stories, we see heaven's lightning thrust its bright blade down through clouds and darkness to transfix the wickedness hiding thereunder. Evangelical readers have a further satisfaction in finding the whole poem of "Halbert and Hob" conclude upon man's need of supernatural influences to save him. The last lines are:

"Is there a reason in nature for these hard hearts?" O
Lear,
That a reason outside of nature must turn them soft
seems clear!"

In other places in his poems the evangelical cast of Browning's faith is visible. Moncure D. Conway disputed with him in vain over the reference to "original sin—the corruption of man's heart" at the end of "Gold-Hair." Unitarianism was pressed upon him by some clever people, among them Conway, who argued in the house and on the street against evangelicalism, the only result

being that Browning listened with a queer look which made Conway feel that he was being zoologized, scrutinized, and studied as if he were a sort of freak or strange specimen, the latest Harvard development in religion.

VIII. Browning ennobles life by spiritualizing all its relationships. This appears supremely in the elevated and dignified manner in which he deals with the most powerful of human passions; the passion which may lift man highest or drag him lowest according to the way it is managed. For the study of human passions Browning is a great and safe master, capable and chaste. Birrell says, "Browning is at the very front of the interpreters of human passion." A keen analyzer and powerful portrayer of the forces and frailties of human nature, he handles all purely. No one ever got smirch or taint from his pages, for they hold not a single leprous line. Nothing unclean goes up upon his highway, and the print of a satyr's hoof is not found thereon. With Browning love is always spiritual, as with William Morris and many others in literature it is of the earth, earthy. He is too sturdy to dawdle with "the roses and raptures of passion," the "lilies and languors of love." There is nothing Anacreontic, no touch of mere amorousness or Swinburnian sensuousness. From all this he keeps further away than even Tennyson does.

"Under a foot they cannot smutch
He holds the fleshly and the bestial."

His sculptured thought is as spotless white as Carrara marble, as pure as the Apollo Belvidere or Powers' Greek Slave. Now, this is doubtless partly due to the intellectuality and chivalric high-mindedness of his own noble nature; partly, also, let us reverently acknowledge, to the influence of that hallowed union which was consummated when Elizabeth Barrett in her forty-first year became his wife. That was a heavenly marriage hardly matched in human history. The first query of our wonder is, Did ever so strong a woman have for husband a man still stronger than herself? But this soon gives place to another: Did ever so high a man find a woman so entirely on his own height that for the joining of matrimonial hands he need not stoop nor she reach up; a bride of such a stature as to meet her tall, unbending bridegroom's kiss with level lips. The soul of Robert Browning was sanctified by his own experience of an ideally perfect human love. And when his white hand laid down its guiltless pen at its last period, this was his illustrious praise, secure in perpetuity: He wrote nothing she could wish to blot, no sentence upon which that "Lyric love, half angel and half bird," whom he apostrophizes with lifted and beseeching eyes as he commences "The Ring and the Book," might not from out her heavenly home smile down her benediction as he craved.

IX. One of Browning's enduring values is that he is the poet for a lifetime, an author fit to

live with for fifty years. It is worth whatever effort it may cost to arrange a high intellectual and spiritual alliance which can last.

In the first place it requires a life-study for the full appreciation of Browning; a casual acquaintance cannot master, measure, or thoroughly understand him. In the next place he furnishes material enough to last a lifetime. His flocks find extensive pasturage. He is not an author of one book, nor a singer immortal by a single poem, but the creator of a literature—twenty dense volumes resulting from nearly sixty years of assiduous authorship. Not only do the products of his fertile and unflagging genius constitute a literature in themselves, but upon this a second literature of criticism and commentary, varied, voluminous, and ever-increasing, has arisen, until the Browning bibliography is in interest, ability, and bulk such as never gathered around the work of any other author in or near the period of his own life. And it seems likely that the nature of his themes and his manner of dealing with them, together with the present recoil of world-thought from materialism and rationalism toward the spiritual and ethical and Christian, will make the growth of this literature as great in the future as in the past.

Another thing which insures permanence for Browning is the simple naturalness of his spirit and the breadth of his sympathy. He is not

aristocratic and exclusive; no dainty poet of a superior class like Matthew Arnold or even Clough, but *in his spirit*, a man for the masses. Nor is he the poet of a race like Tennyson, who is limited by being so distinctly Anglican. What we find in the Laureate is the culture and refinement of England's Victorian age. His ideas and their setting are of English type. Browning is unprovincial; equally Greek, Italian, English; in fact cosmopolitan, a citizen of the world and of the centuries, thinking not in the dialect of one tribe, but in the language of mankind, so broadly human that he touches the universal and this universality makes his work perennial. Even a petulant critic, vexed at excessive eulogies of Browning, involuntarily concedes enough to justify the strong encomiums in saying, "He is the greatest and least of singers, the least and the greatest of dramatists, the wisest and most foolish of philosophers; in a word he is 'all mankind's epitome.'" What this critic says of inequalities in Browning may, with some abatement, be conceded of him, as of all authors. No one contends that all that Browning has written is great. No man's poorest is very good. In the best and greatest we must cull and select. Even Homer nods and Shakespeare's worst is bad enough. Unevenness in Browning is conceded; nevertheless, for sustained cerebration he is matched by few. But the point we care for here is that a hostile critic ends by calling him "all

mankind's epitome." Sidney Lanier, with a characteristically clever touch, calls the mocking-bird the Shakespeare of the feathered choirs because he "sums the woods in song"; his "silver whistlings" sample all bird lore and life. The Bard of Avon is called myriad-minded, but scarcely more deserves to be so crowned than does the author who in his "One Word More to E. B. B.," bids her take his "fifty men and women." Certain are we that except in Shakespeare no gallery of characters is found in poetry so large, significant, and rich as Browning's. So great and varied is his range that it is less extravagant than Richard Steele's tribute to Lady Elizabeth Hastings, for us to say that a complete knowledge of Browning is a liberal education.

Again, Browning is a permanency because he is not discarded by the advancing seasons of the student's life. Aubrey De Vere tells us that his youthful enthusiasm for Byron fell away "like a bond broken by being outgrown"; and he exchanged Byron for Wordsworth, whom he considered the greatest poet of his century. W. T. Stead testifies that in youth he was captivated by Scott's poems. First, he read "The Lay of the Last Minstrel"; later, "Marmion" and "The Lady of the Lake"; and then "Scott's charm was exhausted; he interested me no more." Philip Gilbert Hamerton also wrote: "To a youth who becomes thoughtful, Scott is insufficient." Henry James once said that Tennyson has been tacitly

classed as a poet whom one thinks most of while one's taste is immature; and that young persons of twenty read Tennyson; while young persons of thirty or forty or over read Browning. Maarten Maartens speaks of Schiller as a young man's poet, and adds that every young German goes through a Don Carlos period when he *schwärms* for the political ideals represented by the Marquis of Posa—from which he presently recovers. Bliss Carman thinks that "Hiawatha" is the only one of Longfellow's poems that retains its charm after the reader has reached the critical stage.

Now, with Browning the reader's experience is entirely different. The strong and passionless intellectuality of mature middle life does not lay him aside as it does, for example, the foamy and sensational poetry of ardors and fervors and fondlings. He is not caviare to that post-meridian sobriety which on the one hand has lost interest in love-lorn languishings, and on the other cannot endure the moaning and sighing of young gentlemen who are sad for very wantonness, and of singers who mope so picturesquely and who say, like the youthful Samuel Rogers,

"There's such a charm in melancholy,
I would not if I could be gay."

This is partly due to our poet's longevity. He sang to men out of six decades. He is not one of those short-lived singers, of whom there have been many whose early death bequeathed us only the

bloom-poetry of youth, which, however fine, fragrant, luxuriant, and delicate, or fiery and passionately powerful, cannot have certain qualities of universality and perpetuity. Keats, Shelley, Byron, Lanier, and many others died young. Browning, with full and sustained vitality, lived and sang on almost to fourscore. Their poetry is of the morning, and leaves the query wandering in our minds, "What would they have written in life's noon and afternoon and evening?" Nor do we know but that "the mediocrity of middle life," against which Margaret Fuller warns us, might have smothered their fire. Oliver Wendell Holmes wrote to young Thomas Bailey Aldrich: "Our poets do not ripen well—they are larks in the morning, sparrows at noon, and owls before evening."

Browning's poetry is for all periods of human life because written from all periods, and that too without any sign of decadence or abatement of force. Huxley wrote in 1893: "A great proportion of poetry is addressed by the young to the young. Only the great masters of the art are capable of divining, or think it worth while to enter into, the feelings of retrospective age. Two great poets, Tennyson and Browning, have done this, each in his own inimitable way, the one in the 'Ulysses,' the other in that wonderful fragment, 'Childe Roland to the Dark Tower Came.'" In this connection we cannot refrain from remarking how richly fortunate were the genera-

tions which looked on three such old men as Browning, Tennyson, and Whittier, nearly of an age, haloed with white hair and the glory of pure lives, crowned with the laurels of high poetic fame.

For the individual student who adopts him, Browning may be called the ultimate poet, because no one graduates from him to a higher. No superior master arrives to alienate the pupil's affections. Browning's congregation is not depleted by proselyting; whom he gains he keeps. The love of him is fatal and final; "till death us do part" is the formula which weds author and disciple. Indeed, whoever falls under his power is so held with hooks of steel that he is not likely to get away "while life, and thought, and being last or immortality endures." No ripening of faculty, no elevation or enlargement of mental or moral life will take him out of the zones which Browning inhabits, for our poet not only occupies the earth but annexes the heavens. Whoever joins company with him has found a comrade spirit whom he cannot outsoar in this world or any other. It is worth while to put Browning into your library, because once admitted the volumes are on the shelf to stay, not to be weeded out in later years.

A Browning enthusiast and a Browning skeptic traveled through the Holy Land and Europe together. One April day, on horseback, riding over Beth-horon toward Jerusalem, the enthusi-

ast recited "Herve Riel"; and there came a spark of kindled fire into the skeptic's eye and an illumination into his face betokening a thrill of keen pleasure in his mind. On a July afternoon, in that same year, in an hour of rest, after crossing the Furca and Grimsel passes, in that spot of wild, bleak, and gloomy Alpine environment, the Grimsel Hospice, the enthusiast read aloud that tender and holy poem, "One Word More," and there came on the face of the Browning skeptic a look of awe, like the air of one who is moved to worship and in his eyes a mixture of light and dew. From that hour he was a captive. He discovered that no poet of any age had so much with which his own robust mind and buoyant spirit would have affinity as the author of "Rabbi Ben Ezra," which Gilbert Haven called the noblest lyric of life ever written. The skeptic who was convicted on Beth-horon and converted in the Grimsel Hospice was over thirty years a bishop, fitly enough the mountain-bishop, pitching his episcopal tent on the flanks of the Rockies, and Robert Browning was for Bishop Warren *nolens volens* the ultimate poet.

X. Robert Browning is the poet of faith and faith's inalienable good cheer, of immense value against the wretched singers of unfaith with its weary woe. It is no small reason for thanksgiving that the strongest hand that has struck the muses' lyre in our time is firmly Christian. This great classicist, the author of "Agamemnon,"

"Balaustion's Adventure" and "Aristophanes' Apology," is Christian to the core. His classicism does not paganize him. He loves Greek masterpieces, Greek heroes, Greek history, and Greek thought, but believes that there is more of the power and wisdom of God in Jesus Christ than in "all the old philosophies that ever sang on Argive heights."

The absence of any noble and invigorating faith makes much of modern poetry clammy, chilly, and dejected. When irreligion does not run to levity or coarseness, its tendency is to steep literature in sadness. For example, most of William Morris' work is overhung by that cloud of melancholy that shadows his "Earthly Paradise," in which he calls himself "the idle singer of an empty day," piping to the suitable accompaniment of wild December winds. Andrew Lang has said that doubt and painful skepticism inform William Morris' earlier poems, and the burden of his long narrative poems is *vanitas vanitatum*, the fleeting, unsatisfying nature of human existence, the perishable dream "rounded by a sleep." A similar gloom pervades the writings of Dante Gabriel Rossetti, whose "House of Life" is a dreary and haunted domicile. The fine sweet soul of Arthur Hugh Clough doubts too much for cheerfulness. Even in Alfred Tennyson the mournful tone too often predominates. The "Idylls of the King" are intensely sorrowful. Listen to the verses beginning "Flow down

cold rivulet to the cold sea"; and those others, "Break, break, break at the foot of thy crags"; or to the dreamy regretful song of "The Lotus Eaters"; or to the pitiful dirge of passionate despair wailed out to the crags of Mount Ida by the desolate CEnone. Although the great laureate ranked unquestionably on the Christian side and was a lifelong student of the Bible, to which it is said three hundred references are made in his poems, yet the tone of his faith is not so buoyant and wholesome as we could wish. There is here and there a tinge of eighteenth-century philosophic unbelief and nineteenth-century scientific skepticism. He is an apostle of uncertainty who often does no more than "stretch lame hands of faith and grope and faintly trust." The London Spectator says: "Tennyson's tremulous faith utters itself with a faltering voice and in a sort of sob." Browning's faith was robust; it was not "perpetual unbelief kept quiet." When Tennyson was asked what his religion was, he used to say: "Read 'In Memoriam'; I have written it there." In "In Memoriam" are dubious shadows, where spiritual realities seem more ghostly than substantial; and the serious charge is made against it, that "In it one finds chiefly vain regrets and vain lamentations, an utter prostration of will and a total absence of that moral power which alone can triumph over misfortune." In not a few of his works are dim passages where Faith walks with fear and trembling, treading on

things that hiss and squirm and coil about her feet, and sometimes draw blood. But the chief poet of skepticism is Matthew Arnold, whose writings consist largely of variations on one theme—the irreconcilable divorce between the intellect and the soul, the hopeless inability of reason to keep company with faith. Arnold voices the sickly and feverish unrest of his age, its moral distresses, its intellectual bewilderment and hesitations, its spiritual debility and tremulousness. He wears with proud, sad majesty, like a crown of thorns, the consciousness of his own superior endowments, being cursed with that exceptional clearness of vision which cannot help perceiving that faith is superstition. He hears the ocean of belief withdrawing like an ebbing tide on Dover Beach. To us Arnold's dealing with the pressing problems of life and thought seems painfully weak and superficial, with no result but repining and despair, and no remedy or relief suggested except the cold serenity of stoic fortitude.

From all this it is an ineffable comfort to turn to the master-singer of the century, of whom Professor C. T. Winchester, one of the most correct and capable of American critics, writes: "If there be one English poet who above all others through the last twenty years, in a doubting and denying generation, has kept robust faith in the great spiritual verities; one poet whose verse has been filled with 'the power of an endless life,'

that poet is Browning. Of him men in after times will surely say, as he himself in one of his later poems predicts, 'He at least believed in soul, was very sure of God.' " A great English critic once said that the two men of the nineteenth century who most firmly believed that Jesus Christ is God were John Henry Newman and Robert Browning. The exaggeration is based in truth. The conviction of Browning's lifetime is in his tremendous lines :

"I say, the acknowledgment of God in Christ,
Accepted by thy reason, solves for thee
All questions in the earth and out of it,
And hath so far advanced thee to be wise."

The men of science, making a new world, and the critics a new Bible, did not disturb his faith. Where is the actuary who can appraise the value of such a man to an age described by John Stuart Mill as one of "weak convictions, paralyzed intellects, and growing laxity of opinions"?

Surrounded by the forlorn and lugubrious poets of modern doubt—Matthew Arnold with his sad unbelief, James Thomson with his bald atheism, Swinburne with his ribald scalding blasphemies, and Edwin Arnold with his excessive glorification of paganism—the faith of Sakya Muni—good Robert Browning towers, like his own Hercules in "Balaustion's Adventure," a strong and splendid figure. To the cold marble halls of literature where these moping poets weep and wail as at the funeral of faith, he comes as,

we are told (in "Balaustion's Adventure"), Hercules came to the sorrowing house of Admetos, bereft of Alkestis. The hero with a lion skin covering his mighty shoulders and an irresistible, sound, wholesome heart within, nearing the thresholds sends his voice before him to herald through the gloomy hall the arrival of a helper not wholly undivine:

"A great voice!

Oh the thrill that runs through us!

Never was aught so good as that great interrupting voice!

And sudden into the midst of sorrow leaps,

Along with the gay cheer of that great voice,

Hope, joy, salvation: Hercules is here!"

Such a presence, such a voice is Browning's, and they mean the same—hope, joy, salvation. It is not surprising that Mary Grace Walker, in the London Academy, bears testimony to Browning thus:

"This yoke was laid upon me in my youth,
To long for faith yet be enslaved by doubt.
I called, but there was none to answer me,
Till, bearer of the two-edged sword of truth,
He came and drove the lurking demon out
That late possessed my soul, and set me free."

It is not surprising that a lady who believed herself near to death wrote to Browning to thank him for the spiritual aid his poems had given her, telling him how it strengthened her to find so highly gifted a man of genius holding firmly to the great truths of revealed religion and especially to a belief in immortality. Browning, in a

quick reply to the dying woman, assured her that he saw ever more and more reason to hold by that great hope, though nowise ignorant of all that skeptics have advanced against it. He told her that on these questions he had been aware of the communication of something more subtle than a ratiocinative process, and mighty convictions had thrilled his soul to its depth. "As when Napoleon, shutting up the New Testament said of Christ: 'Do you know that I am an understander of men? Well, He was no mere man.'"

An American writer, spokesman for multitudes of grateful hearts on our side of the sea, speaking of the soul's dark days of faintness and fear, when evil fancies hover and life seems a waste, and death brings its cold shadow on, wrote to Browning thus: In such stranded hours,

"Some stream of thy great songs will touch and lift
My feet and bear me—till triumphantly
On floods of glorious faith I ride past rift,
Past shoal and cataract, and out to sea;
And mingled with those conquering currents' drift,
Sink soft on rest. Thy songs, they solace me."

Another gives thanks to Browning thus:

"Thou art so sure! What spirit brings
Thee surety? Others hope; thou say'st '*I know*
The spirit is immortal.' And for thy confidence
In that which was our mother's ground of trust
We thank thee—thou, so nobly learn'd, so just
In judgment, thought, and feeling; so intense
In all that makes a man. We give thee praise
And thanks, thou trusting soul, midst doubting days."

We are told of a gifted and ardent woman who once said that when everything else failed she read: "Saul"; and then she heard once more the clear tone of faith calling through the darkness as the song of the shepherd boy called to King Saul in the blackness of his despair.

XI. Browning's character and life and works stand together in the unison of a perfect harmony, full of inspiration, courage, and help for mankind. Looking on him we take from "Columbe's Birthday" his own words to describe him through all the years of his life:

"He gathers earth's whole good into his arms,
Standing as man now stately, strong, and wise,
With a great aim like guiding-star above
Which tasks strength, wisdom, stateliness to lift
His manhood to the height that takes the prize."

Having lived long, pursuing lofty designs in this great fashion, how is it with this high man when he comes to make an end? No drooping, no faltering; superbly he keeps his level. This strong runner, who never yet found horsemen that could weary him, is a brave swimmer, unafraid of the swellings of Jordan. Nothing could be more royally characteristic than the final appearance of the nineteenth century's greatest poet. It is "Prospice" over again.

In the epilogue of *Asolando*, the last book of his many-volumed life, just moist from the press, when our eyes perusing it were moistened at tidings of his death, the silver-haired poet forbids

that we, in midnight mood, surrounded by the silence of the sleep-time, shall think pityingly of the spot where his form lies low, as if he were, according to the fancy of fools, imprisoned in the grave; and commands that in bright noon-day mood and in the full swing of man's work-time, scarce pausing in the bustle of our action, we greet for him the unseen with a cheer; that with our expectation and our wishes we bid him God-speed mounting upward, and believe that yonder, worlds away, where the strange and new have birth, in the heaven's height, far and steep, he still strives and thrives, fights on, fares ever there as here. Lower thoughts in our minds than these concerning him would be to him, he says, an affront and dishonor undeserved, because on earth he had nothing to do with the slothful, or the mawkish, or the unmanly, never driveled like the aimless and the helpless and the hopeless. Rather was he

"One that never turned his back but marched breast forward,

Never doubted clouds would break;

Never dreamed when right seemed worsted that wrong
could triumph;

Held we fall to rise, are baffled to fight better, and at last
We only sleep to wake."

In this final message to mankind on earth, we hear the dear familiar and sonorous voice, unchanged in spite of almost eighty years, rich, clear, and powerful as ever; the same buoyancy

of spiritual certitude, the same blissful and jubilant sense of surely imperishable existence, the same unwearied psychic energy, the same intrepid faith, the same sympathy with glorious action in preference to repose, the same warm, strong, earnest, manful lovingness.

The two wondrous poems which close *Asolando*—the “Reverie” and the “Epilogue”—certify to us that existence meant to Robert Browning at the last just what it meant at the first, when, at the age of twenty-three, he wrote in Paracelsus words which were favorite with Chinese Gordon and are worthy to be favorite with us all:

“I go to prove my soul!
 I see my way as birds their trackless way;
 I shall arrive: what time, what circuit first
 I know not. But some time,
 In God’s good time. I shall arrive.
 He guides me and the birds. In His good time!”

THE DOUBLE SKY

ABOVE man's life there are two skies: one the visible firmament over his head, with its innumerable suns and systems; the other the spiritual heavens above the soul in which the great revealed realities of the spirit world swing and shine.

In sight of these two skies was written the nineteenth psalm, the psalm of the Double Sky, which begins with the firmament declaring the glory of God and ends with the true and righteous law of the Lord, converting the soul, rejoicing the heart, and enlightening the eyes.

Into this Double Sky the great German philosopher Immanuel Kant was reverently looking when he said, "Two things fill me with admiration and awe, the starry heavens and the moral law."

Man's capacity for recognizing and exploring the Double Sky is what differentiates him from the brute and marks him as a child of God, aware of, and allied to, things above. Max Müller says that the ancients derived the Greek word "Anthropos (man) from *ὁ ἀνω ἀθρῶν*—he who looks upward"; and adds that, whether this derivation be true or not, "certain it is that what makes man to be a man is that he alone can turn

his face to heaven ; he alone of earthly creatures yearns for something more and higher than either sense or reason can supply." Wordsworth pictures the old Cumberland Beggar with "the heaven-regarding eye and front sublime which man is born to." Ovid remarked that "the countenance of man directed on high bids him consider things above."

Not to consider the Double Sky is to live a low life and incur infinite loss. Looking back over history and speaking of the decline of nations, Lacordaire said, "The earth has devoured all those who no longer regarded heaven save as the physical eye discovers it on the horizon." The lower sky is for man's eye. The upper sky is for man's soul, and not without regarding it can man or nation prosper.

Strangely enough, this creature, so obviously intended to look up, and with so much above him to invite his gaze, is prone to keep his eyes fixed on the ground. The ordinary desires of our race are dejected to the earth, and our highest natural ambitions are projected on the level of the carnal mind and the temporal and temporary life. The human creature so habitually goes about so stoop-shouldered and down-visaged that some observers have taken the liberty to tell him that he is only a higher order of brute, as he would be if he never looked up. This down-cast, low-lived habit seems so odd and incongruous in a being with man's powers that it is reasonable to regard it as an

unnatural depravity, a mysterious deflection and degradation of his nature from its intended direction. Under this earthward slant and pitch and plunge of human tendency, special reasons can often be perceived, which, in various cases, help to explain the reluctance to look up.

First, then, are those who do not want to admit convictions that might condemn and disturb their present way of life.

The heavenly bodies are exacting; they claim to rule. Sun, moon, and stars require man to set his time-piece by their movements and arrange the schedule of his life in accordance with the changes and seasons they ordain—with the day and night, spring, summer, autumn, and winter they decree. In like manner the supreme spiritual realities require us to conform, they give laws and set the time for our action and life.

Again, there are others whose upward possibilities are weighted down with the inertia of a low contentment so that they have no desire for fellowship with or knowledge of high things, but are entirely satisfied to live like beasts—to go on all fours in the dirt—and, beyond that, wish only to be permitted to die like beasts and be buried with the burial of an ass. Their chosen manner of life, far more than their anatomy, intimates their brotherhood with the brutes.

And yet again, there are some who are kept from giving any attention to the higher facts of man's existence because they have, explicitly

or virtually, taken a position of antagonism to the views which assert those facts and which insist upon them as urgent, imperative, and supreme. We remember that when Galileo, first of men, had seen in the purple sky of Florence, through his "poor little spyglass," the moons of Jupiter, there was a scientific professor at Padua who refused to look through the telescope lest he should see Jupiter's satellites, which he didn't wish to see because he had declared his disbelief in their existence.

But the things which are above are too great to be ignored. They are to be studied. The sky, whether physical or moral, whether is meant the firmament overhead or the heaven oversoul, is so wonderful that when the thoughtful man becomes aware of it he must also grow observant and studious toward it. Nor is observation useless, for he who studies with the aids afforded shall, in the one case as in the other, assuredly learn. Even though there be in his thinking much that is crude and ungainly, yet even the intellectual blunders of the studious man may be entitled to respect and not obstructive of essential truth. What could seem more absurd than the constellations which the science of astronomy, for the systematizing and furtherance of its work, chalks upon the sky? Yet are they sacred inasmuch as they are serviceable; for even such fanciful figures projected by a primitive imagination do not interfere with accurate knowledge, but actually

facilitate its requirement. In like manner man's religious fancies, even when crudest, may at least serve to hold his studious and earnest face toward heaven and give God's stars a chance to shine into the bottom of his soul. The fact that Chinese Gordon's theological thinking was projected in outline almost as grotesque in some things as the dragon, dolphin, centaur, and unicorn of astronomy, did not prevent him from such distinct and intelligent vision of the bright star-points of celestial truth as made of him a hero and a saint. Without in the least depreciating the value of valid thought and correct outline, it may be gratefully admitted that through the strangest shapes of human thinking saving truth may shine down to the sincere, up-looking, individual spirit. As Neander truly says, "God meets the aspirations of the truth-seeking soul even in its error."

Bright and splendid as the heavens are, countless and lustrous as are the glorious orbs that roll therein, it is quite possible to live under them altogether ignorant and indifferent toward them. Even some who count themselves learned, and who are so on a low level and within narrow limits, see fit to ignore or deride the sky. There have been a few undevout students and teachers of natural science. Now for science which stays on its reservation and minds its own business we have profound respect, and in its final conclusions, not in its tentative hypotheses, the utmost

faith. We are eager to say with Charles Kingsley, "The laws of nature must reveal God, whatever else does not; and man's scientific conquest of nature must be one phase of his kingdom on earth, whatever else is not." But for scientists who blaspheme against the Creator in his own vast temple, who manifest a propensity to leave their proper work in order to pronounce sentence of death on some Christian doctrine or on religion itself, we feel the utmost impatience. When, for instance, a scientist bids us give up the personality of God as an effete anthropomorphism, and accept, in place of this Divine Personality, a cosmic force, or impersonal law, or an eternal life-principle, or a "superpersonal omnipresence," or any other similar invention and makeshift, we suffer a shuddering chill. Why should physical science curl the lip at religion and theology? Is not science itself obtained and achieved, as Bowne used to say, by cognitive activities which rest on postulates that admit of no proof beyond their value in satisfying the needs and demands of our total nature? Does not science trust to the pure assumption that these postulates are true because they do so satisfy our nature? Well, it is a central need of man's nature that he should be allowed to go on saying "Our Father," as Jesus Christ tells him to do. An infinite and eternal Personality, having intelligence, consciousness, affection, and will, is a necessity of our religious nature if not also of

our mental constitution. The scientist who imagines our living Christianity to be defunct and dances round the giant faith with a tape-measure, begging it to stand still long enough to be measured for its coffin; who keeps driving a hearse up to the church door, expecting the cold remains of religion to be brought out for burial; the scientist attempting the role of undertaker toward the sanctities of revelation and of the human soul, is a weariness to flesh and spirit both. Christianity, receiving notice of the obsequies, simply sends word that it hasn't time to be buried, being so busy conquering the world that it cannot possibly take a day off to attend the proposed funeral, and, in fact, though that great funeral has been frequently announced, the undertakers have never been able to catch the corpse, which is a mighty angel inhabiting the sky and flying over the earth on wings, while its pursuers have only clumsy feet, which mire at every step. Won't somebody please telephone the undevout astronomers and all the ilk of anti-religious scientists that it is quite too early to arrange for the obsequies of Christianity? Two Irish laborers were at work on a building. One told the other of a smart and saucy infidel who had lectured in the town. "What did he say?" says Mike. "Why, he says Christianity is dead," answered Pat. "Well, it's a mighty quare dead thing that's building five churches in this town this very year." It might be well for the coroner to call Mike as one

of the jury when the inquest is held over Christianity, for at least he knows the symptoms of life and can tell the difference between a live thing and a dead thing. As for all undevout and godless learning, all culture which is of the earth earthy—merely mundane and not cosmic, terrestrial and excluding the celestial—the only symbolically proper place for its university is down in the dark caverns of the Mammoth Cave, where, secure from the annoying intrusion of the light of other worlds, they may successfully teach the folly of those who believe in a sky, and where the bats and the mice and the eyeless fish may be trained to join with them in their agnostic chant, and conjugate their “ignoramus,” “We don’t know; you don’t know; nobody knows.” And the department of astronomy should be put in charge of some wise old mole with powerful jaws, a penetrative snout, and undiscoverable eyes, whose first lecture on astronomy should begin thus: “Astronomy! My beloved pupils, there can be no such science as astronomy; for there are no other worlds but this; therefore we will take up the sublime science of burrowing, study the glorious movements of our cousins the earthworms, and consider how noble is their destiny and ours—to bore a hole in the ground, crawl into it and die happy in the magnanimous and altruistic thought that our precious carcasses will enrich the soil and fatten the generation that comes crawling after us.”

There are not wanting a few who seem to have a spite against celestial things and would fain extinguish all faith in the starry realities which light the firmament of the human soul. Carlyle pictures a conjurer denouncing the stars and trying to squirt them to death with a syringe filled with mud and dirty water, which he aims at the zenith; the sole result being that the conjurer and his friends are badly splattered with falling mud and foul water. Of such conjurers the most rabidly spiteful in our day was Nietzsche, who cried out to his comrades: "I conjure you, my brethren, *remain true to the earth*, and do not believe those who speak to you of supernatural hopes! They are poisoners, whether they know it or not. They are despisers of life, decaying ones and poisoned ones themselves, of whom the earth is weary; let them begone!" In Byron and Bradlaugh and Blatchford there is something of this bitterness against things high and holy, as also in Edgar A. Poe, who is reported to have said once that his whole nature revolted from the idea that there existed any being superior to himself! And he said only what many act. His life shows with tragic completeness how insufficient was this enormous self-sufficiency for any good to himself or others. Little enough basis had even he for such mad inflated intellectual pride; and pitiable enough was the phenomenal misery he succeeded in achieving for himself.

It is better to study the sky than to ignore

it, for it is just as real as the ground. It is more seemly to be in love with it than to hate it, for we and all men are its daily debtors. Influences and gifts immeasurable come from above. Our day comes down to us and all growth is by its assistance, for growth is largely by celestial traction. The sky pulls the seed up into stalk and the acorn up out of the black forest loam. It is not done without the up-tug of the force that reaches down. We owe all food, in a measure, to the sky. The "dear blue" above us contributes to the ripe result of the harvests around us. Bread is manna without a miracle, since partly it falls from the sky. It is now known that all physical or vital energy at work on the surface of this planet comes from the sun. Every drop of water that falls, every wave that beats, every wind that blows, every creature that moves here, one and all are animated and sustained by that mysterious effluence we call the sunbeam. And no man knows how it is done, nor even how that tremendous power is transmitted across the ninety-two millions of miles of space between sun and earth. Furthermore, we know that the sun is continually flinging on this earth magnetic disturbances which run periods of a solar day, a solar year, and a solar cycle. In these magnetic storms the heavens literally seize the earth by its poles and shake it. Such well-known facts as these are not made less certain by being profound and inexplicable mysteries.

Now, our religion affirms just the same to be true of the spiritual sky which pours and pulses on man's soul a mighty and moving influence. The Sun of Righteousness is shedding his quickening beams upon the world of humanity, and unseen forces from above are acting upon the moral life of men and nations. More and more it becomes apparent that the earth is powerfully affected by the heavens. In fact, spiritually as well as physically, this world is run by sky-power.

Whether planets and stars in our sky are inhabited we do not with certainty know. But native human instincts affirm a peopled region above our souls, a spiritual realm populous and palpitant with life. In Georgia, John Wesley, conversing with the Indian chief Paustoobee, asked him concerning the religion of his people, and was answered, "We believe there are four sacred things above—the clouds, the sun, the clear sky, and He who lives in the clear sky." No belief is more Christian than this of inhabited heavens, and those pagan aborigines were at least facing in the Christian direction. Inhabited heavens, coming now and then into view and hearing, are a part of the historic setting of Christianity in the Old and New Testaments. The skies above Bethlehem broke into song when a company of the heavenly hosts appeared and sang. When Jesus was baptized at the fords of the Jordan a voice was heard speaking out of

heaven. And the sky was vocal when Peter and James and John were with the Master on the Mount of Transfiguration. All religions worthy of the name declare that the skies under which man lives are attentive and responsive. Between the human soul and the heavens there is telephonic communication. In the inner office of man's nature is a sensitive instrument wired into connection with the infinite, and often when he is alone and all is still he can hear fragments as of conversation going past on the wires. Sometimes he hears something like the goings on in an office of government, orders being sent out: "Thou shalt" and "Thou shalt not"; and the voice of what some call the Imperative Absolute distinctly recognizable. Such things even an indifferent listener may sometimes hear when he is all alone with his conscience. The moment of happy intelligence is when one learns that this great Authoritative Voice is not roaming at random, nor calling past him on a party wire, but has a message for him; when he understands that the bell which strikes in his own soul means that he himself is called, realizes that it is a signal from the celestial Central Office that Someone whom no distance can put far off wishes to speak to him; and when he puts the spiritual receiver close to his ear and listens reverently to the mysterious Voice from out the unseen. Surely it is a momentous hour when any soul becomes aware of the heavens and conscious of a

personal relation therewith. A few historic pictures may illustrate and illuminate the significance of such an hour.

Once, long ago, there was a rich man who held a fat office under the Roman government as tax collector at Jericho. Zacchæus had never paid any attention to the sky above his soul till one day he climbed a sycamore tree and clung there among the branches above the heads of a crowd to see a Man arrive. But behold, it was no mere man that approached, but a new day that broke over him. Sunrise came along the road in the person of One who when he lets his glory blaze is bright enough to light up all heaven beyond the need of sun, or moon, or stars. Sunrise went home with Zacchæus, illuminated his house, sat at his table, shone into his soul. Sunrise, spiritual sunrise, poured the light of day on his dishonest life, and he stood in the exposure, ashamed, alarmed, and penitent. Thenceforth he took care that the watching heavens, of which he had just become aware, should look down on a clean life and an honest soul that could bear to have the light turned on, and could even sit vis-à-vis with the Sunrise-Christ undismayed because unrebuked.

A certain Jerusalem thief never knew what was above his soul till the authorities got hold of him, drove spikes through his hands and feet, and hung him up between heaven and earth. Then he saw such a light in the face of the One on the cross next to his that he discovered God,

repented, prayed, and mounted into paradise that very day.

Before the apostle to the Gentiles died he was pretty well acquainted with the heavens, first, second, third, but Saul of Tarsus was a long time getting any correct knowledge of spiritual astronomy. Gamaliel did not teach it in his school, or if he did, it was on a false conception, Jewish, not Christian, a wrong center, Ptolemaic, not Copernican. After the youth from Tarsus had finished school he one day enjoyed the pleasure of seeing a young man stoned. He stood by and held the outer garments of those who were pelting the life out of innocent Stephen; and standing right there he failed to see the open heaven into which the bruised martyr steadfastly looked. Too stupid was the Tarsan to guess whence came the light which glorified that bleeding face into angelic beauty. When they had pounded the pure soul out of its broken body he handed back their coats to the panting and perspiring stoners, and went his Pharisaic way, still unconscious that He who sitteth at the right hand of God was watching and purposing to deal with him right mightily ere long. He went on through the years and never really knew what was overhead, until one day, when his heart was still one of the dark corners of the earth and full of cruelty, all at once, near Damascus, the long neglected and misunderstood heavens began to blaze at him indig- nantly and talk to him with articulate message.

He fell to the ground, listened to the message, and made reverent response. Awe-struck, dazzled, tremulous, and pale from his celestial interview, he groped his dim way into the city. The most violent adversary of Christianity was transformed into its most valiant advocate by listening to what the heavens had to say; a transformation which even the infidel Baur declares a miracle, and Lord Lyttelton said that the conversion and apostleship of Paul is of itself sufficient to prove Christianity a divine revelation. From that time he followed a high calling, and whether he was being let down the wall in a basket, or making Felix tremble, or explaining to Agrippa how he came to be a Christian, or lecturing the Athenians, or rebuking the Corinthians, or taking command of a storm-driven ship, or shaking off vipers into the fire, or writing love letters to Timothy, or following the headsman out the Ostian gate, or kneeling for the death stroke—all his life he felt himself talked to and watched over from on high.

It is recorded how the spiritual heavens talked above a New England country tavern one night in 1807. Toward evening a young man rides up on horseback at the door of the village inn to stop over night. Look at him, for he is remarkable. He graduated not long before from Brown University at the head of his class, an avowed infidel, the boon companion of skeptics. On leaving college, he and his most intimate classmate,

also a scoffer, had decided to become playwrights and actors, and he has already joined a theatrical company in New York city. He is now on a journey and stops for lodging at this wayside inn. He retires to his room. Through the thin partition he hears the groans of a sick man in the room adjoining. The sounds of distress continue far into the night and then cease. Spite of his infidelity he lies there wondering if the sick man is prepared to die. In the morning he inquires of the landlord concerning the sufferer, and is told that he died at daybreak. He asks the dead man's name and is startled to hear the name of his own best-loved classmate. He goes up and looks at the familiar face, white, cold, and silent. Standing there, the question, which sounds in his mind as if it dropped from the sky, is this: "Was he prepared to die?" and then instantly the question swings on a pivot, strikes against his own soul, and is changed into, "Am I prepared to die?" He turns away, stunned as by a heavy blow, abandons his journey, returns to his father's house, feels himself a lost and guilty sinner and dares not look up at the face of God. He goes to Andover, studies the Bible, and shortly accepts Christ as his Saviour and Lord. Five years subsequent to his godless graduation this young man, Adoniram Judson, is on his way to the mission field to give all his life to Burma. Thirty years later, having so given his life, he mounts up to God.

Not long after the heavens had dropped their tremendous and awakening question into the soul of young Judson in that New England tavern, a like event took place on a vessel of the United States navy. The man-of-war Essex is lying off New Orleans. On board is a cabin boy thirteen years old. The youngster is trying hard to make himself a man after his ideal of manhood. He chews and smokes tobacco, swears like an old salt, tosses off a stiff glass of grog as if he had doubled Cape Horn, and is great at cards and gambling. The boy is named after the captain of the ship. One day, after dinner, his name-father, the captain, calls him into his cabin, locks the door and says, "David, what do you mean to be?"

"I mean to follow the sea," answers the boy.

"Follow the sea?" says Captain Porter, sternly. "Yes, and be a poor, miserable, drunken sailor before the mast, kicked and cuffed all your days, and die alone and friendless in some fever hospital in a foreign land."

"No, sir! I'll tread the quarter-deck and command a ship as you do."

"No, David, you won't. No boy ever reached the quarter-deck with such habits as yours. You'll have to change your whole life before you can possibly rise to a man's place."

Then he sends the lad out. The captain has done his duty, and the sharp warning rattles like thunder across the sky of the boy's soul. Life suddenly looks solemn to him; a sense of his free

agency, responsibility, and danger comes to him.
..... "That's my fate, is it—to live like a dog and die
friendless? It shall not be! I'll change my
ways. I'll never drink or swear or gamble
again"; and, looking up prayerfully, he calls on
God in heaven to witness his vow. He was
frightened at that sharp warning and became a
Christian. Just for the sake of completing the
story, let us take another look at that boy over
forty years later. It is off New Orleans again.
A United States squadron lies far down the river.
It is two o'clock of an April morning when two
red lights are hoisted to the masthead of the flag-
ship, a signal to the fleet to weigh anchor and pro-
ceed. The vessels move up the river in a double
line. Presently they are abreast of the fort, and
a perfect hell of fire and death blazes out on them
from Fort Saint Philip on the right and Fort
Jackson on the left. The battle rages furiously.
The Varuna founders side by side with two Con-
federate ships, which she has sunk. The Brook-
lyn silences Fort Saint Philip. It is a terrific
naval fight. Who is commanding there? It is
Farragut—noblest of American naval comman-
ders in his day. And Farragut is the cabin boy
who sent his vow into the heavens from these
same waters so long ago. The boy kept his vow;
and so he came to tread the quarter-deck, to
command his country's fleets, and to be the great
Christian admiral.

Time would fail to speak of Augustine, and

Luther, and Bunyan, whose souls were changed from center to circumference and whose lives were completely reversed by a Voice from above; of Joan of Arc, who was mysteriously guided on an amazing career by the Voice, which told her what should be and what she ought to do; of Lady Henry Somerset, who, when in the depths of doubt even of God's existence, heard something like a voice saying, "Act as if I were, and thou shalt know that I am," and, obeying it, left all her doubts behind and went forth on her beautiful life of devoted service for mankind at the head of the temperance women of England; and of an innumerable host of others like them.

The physical sky above us suggests by analogy several things concerning the spiritual heavens. The first is, the *Universality of the Divine Knowledge*. Omniscience covers the world as completely as the sky does. The traveler in the Holy Land finds the convent of Mar Saba stuck like a hornet's nest high up against the steep wild cliffs of the Kidron. Inside the convent walls is the tomb of Saint Saba, covered by a cupola. When the visitor, standing under this cupola, has looked around at the paintings and silver lamps which ornament the interior of the tomb, and suddenly lifts his look, he is startled at beholding overhead a great painted face filling the dome and looking straight down on him with large eyes. In like manner the spiritual sky above us is a socket from which the Supreme In-

telligence turns on us its searching vision. None can escape that eye. We ought to realize that our existence is a spectacle to the heavens. In that there should be more inspiration to good and more restraint from evil than in all earthly things. The gladiator is sensible not so much of the dust of the small arena upon which he strives and contends as of the crowded amphitheater which circles far around him with its upward slope of eyes, and makes him feel in every fiber of his sensitivity the pelting gaze of witnesses above him. We cannot hide from Omniscience any more than the earth can escape the embrace of the sky.

Another thing which the world-covering firmament suggests is, the *Universality of the Divine Government*. It is a great way around the globe, and a rogue has plenty of room for flight, but, let him ride ever so fast or so far, he cannot ride from under the sky, can he? The great dramatist makes King Henry V say, "Now, if these men have defeated any law and outrun native human punishment, though they can outstrip men, they have no wings to fly from God." As the jurisdiction of the lightning is over the whole heavens, so Divine sovereignty is omnipresent. No transgressor is strong enough to break loose and get free, for "God's laws are not like cobwebs which catch the little flies, but suffer the large ones to break through." Existence is one long interview with a moral Governor who not only watches us,

but holds us to account. It is not possible for any of us to crawl out from under his tent. Whether we will or not, we are closeted with him for a face-to-face accounting which will last till doomsday and a long time after. He is putting solemn questions to us here under the canopy. The tent folds are tightly closed and he looks us in the eye while we answer. We cannot get away, and there is no use in lying. If we evade or prevaricate, the cross-examination conducted by Omniscience will tangle us up and expose us, and we will have the reward of Ananias and Sapphira. We've got to discuss all things with God at close quarters. We must live and die in dialogue with him. It is not wise to make the discussion a controversy. Beyond question, the Supreme Controller has us fast. A thousand ways we are fast—fast in a net of many threads and cords. Emerson, speaking of Reason, says: "It is not mine or thine, but we are its; we are its property and men." Yes, Reason has its grip on us. In like manner Dorner said once, "The truth is, gentlemen, not so much that man has conscience as that conscience has man." With Dorner, as with Kant, Martineau, Professor Knight, of Scotland, and a host of similar rank, we see in the action of conscience not autonomy, but theonomy, the dictates of the moral sense being, in effect, the very voice of God. Yes, Conscience has us, Reason has us, Logic has us, Mathematics has us, the Law of Sowing and Reaping has us, the Law of

Physical Growth and Decay has us, various Intuitions have us, Gravitation has us—many a law of many a kind binds us. We are under the meshes of a net, of which all these are only threads. Above all sits God. He it is who has flung over us this intricate and knotted network, and his hand holds it there. Under it we are captive and entangled. We cannot crawl out from under, nor break through. To escape is impossible, for the Divine government shuts down over us tight and close as the sky does on the horizon's rim.

The universal firmament symbolizes another thing, namely, the *Universality of Divine Providence*. So it is Love that hath us in its net. Alleluia! The overruling embrace of Omnipotence is firm upon us, but the tremendous arms of power reach down from a heart of infinite tenderness. An old Scotch worthy says, "Even the sailing of a cloud hath Providence for its pilot." God's care is over all his works. Up yonder he gives its luster to an angel's wing; down here he feeds the frail bluebell with its drop of dew.

Ibsen describes life as a prison cage, and says that "at him through the prison grating stares an Eye with terror in it; and its gaze sends shudders through him, at which he is sore affrighted." But why be afraid of that great watching Eye? The Eye is there, but he that sitteth in the heavens is not looking for a chance to pounce on us. Through all the darkness and

the storm of life a Divine Voice says, "Be of good cheer; it is I; be not afraid." Even Renan was wiser than Ibsen, for he said, "A fatherly smile shines across Nature and assures us that there is a kind Eye looking at us and a heart that follows us." Without this conviction, reverence and worship were impossible, for we must hold with Browning that "A loving worm within its clod were diviner than a loveless God amid his worlds."

Sometimes we hear a human voice saying bitterly, "The individual is nothing; some general result is all God cares for; individuals are sacrificed." That is the old Stoic maxim raising again in our late day its uninstructed head: "The gods attend to great things and neglect the small." We need not call upon Religion to answer that. The first thing to be said to this despondent view is not that it is unchristian, but that it is scientifically known to be incorrect and unwarranted. Science tells us that facts do not look that way. On the contrary, nothing is more amazing than the marvelous attention lavished on tiny things. It is reported that a man who spent his life trying to count the muscles of a caterpillar found a thousand. What an outfit for a worm! Geology reports a special providence over tiny creatures; while the big fellows, like the ichthyosaurus and the iguanodon, are all gone, extinct, the little fellows, races of tiny zoophytes, are preserved through untold ages and survive now exactly the

same as are found in the rocks of earliest geologic ages.

God takes as good care of a field daisy as he takes of a world. The daisy is waited on by every force in the universe and all the mechanism of the heavens. It is a shareholder in the benefits of the cosmos. It is propped by the same power that maintains the stability of the great globe itself. Far regions send supplies to it. It is watered by rain which the sunbeams have dipped in golden buckets from the surface of far-off oceans and transported in water skins of fleecy cloud by the air line free of charge for its nourishment. Its nightly drink of dew is distilled from the same atmosphere which supports the life of kings and emperors, armies and nations, saints and sages. The daisy is held firmly in its place by the same force that braces together the stupendous structure of the material universe. This feeble flower of the field stands side by side with belted Saturn and many-mooned Jupiter to warm its tiny hands at the same great blazing open fireplace of the sun. It bathes its lovely face in the same bright daylight that sends the morning twenty-seven thousand millions of miles away to distant Neptune. Well does William Blake make the Lily of the Valley, breathing sweet odors in the soft green grass, say to Thel, a "daughter of the seraphim":

"I am a watery weed,
And I am very small and dwell in lowly vales;

So weak I scarce can hold the gilded butterfly perched
on my head.

Yet I am visited from heaven; and He that smiles on all
Walks in the valley, and each morn spreads over me his
hand,

Saying, 'Rejoice, thou humble grass, thou new-born lily-
flower,

Thou gentle maid of silent valleys and of modest brooks,
For I will see that thou be clothed with light and fed with
morning manna.' "

Truly has another said, "The enormous system of nature is available, in mass and in particle, to the humblest needs of the smallest creature that crawls on earth."

God cares for each; he cares for *all*; but most of all for man. There is a convincing argument in the question, "Shall the great Housekeeper and Husbandman of this universe fodder his cattle, and water his flowers, and prune his plants, and not feed and care for his children?" "More servants wait on man than he'll take notice of." "O, mighty Love," says George Herbert, "man is one world and hath another to attend him." A converted Hindu said it pleased him to think of the broad expanse of blue immensity above him as the outspread hand of God—the stars being to his fancy as jewels on the fingers of the Almighty—so that looking up and around to the diamonded sky he felt as if the clasp of his heavenly Father's arms were about him on every side, and as if he could go nowhere that he was not encircled with the embracing love of which the

universal sky that blankets all the world is the only sufficient symbol. Seldom has human fancy pointed straighter at substantial fact. Carlyle shared the Hindu's faith, for he wrote: "Surely as the blue rim of heaven encircles us all, so does the Providence of the Lord of heaven. He will withhold no good thing from those that love him. This, as it was the ancient Psalmist's faith, so let it likewise be ours. This is the Alpha and Omega, I reckon, of all bliss than can belong to any man." Sam Jones put the same thing with his rude vigor in a single sentence: "God will take care of a good man if he has to put the angels on half rations for a year." A little sick boy, five years old, said, "I may not get well; maybe I'll die." He was told God would take care of him whether he lived or died. Then he asked, "Does God, who lives in the sky, know my name?" Being assured that God knew he was little Joe, he seemed soothed and satisfied. O, yes! He who telleth the number of the stars and calleth them all by name knows little Joe, and he who weaponed Orion with his glittering sword, and guides Arcturus with his sons, and wheels his throne upon the rolling worlds, can easily *take care* of little Joe.

In this faith Beethoven found refuge for his soul in his hard and bitter closing years. Deaf, lonely, in bad health and prematurely old, tormented with many troubles and uncertain of tomorrow's dinner, music was no longer a sufficient

consolation. He needed something more to make life endurable, and found it in contemplating the Double Sky. He wrote that "the starry heavens above us and the moral law within us" assured him of a mighty All-Father, an infinite Presence, transcending the range of Time and Death, from whom he came at the first and to whom he would return at the end, who cared for him and would protect him as he himself had protected others. This conviction made the pain of life less acute, rendered existence tolerable to him, engrossed his thoughts, and at times enabled him to forget his troubles altogether. And Louis Stevenson, in his last invalid years, crept in under the shelter of that same pacifying assurance, and wrote a friend, "If you are sure that God, in the long run, means kindness to you, you should be happy." That confidence kept Stevenson's heart in quietness and assurance to the end.

Yet once more, the world-embracing sky suggests the *Universality of the Provisions of Divine Grace*. The star of Bethlehem shines over every human life. The best and the worst alike may sing:

"God's sovereign grace to all extends,
Immense and unconfined;
From age to age it never ends;
It reaches all mankind.

"Throughout the world its breadth is known,
Wide as infinity;
So wide it never passed by one,
Or it had passed by me,"

It is wronging your own soul and giving the lie to God if you think for a moment that his mercy in Christ is not above all your sins. We are authorized to say to every human being: "As you were born in the center of the horizon's circle and always find yourself exactly under the middle of the dome, the whole sky seeming to center upon you, so the whole gospel, with its God, its Bible, its atonement, its Redeemer, and all his promises, centers upon you as if there were no one else to share them. As the physical universe turns upon each tiny flower its measureless regard, and as all matter and all space play off their potent forces on your bodily life, so Heaven plays off on you in focal fashion and with saving purpose its spiritual forces." No soul is utterly unvisited and untouched from above. There is a light which lighteth every man that cometh into the world; the candle of the Lord burns within the human spirit. There is a wind which bloweth where and when it listeth, and first or last every soul heareth the sound thereof as of a mighty rushing wind, or as the whisper of a still small voice.

"Beneath the dome of this universe," wrote Martineau, "we cannot find a place where the musings of the eternal Mind do not murmur around us and where we may not overhear in our heart of hearts the eternal soliloquies of God." All souls may say to the all-visiting Divine Spirit:

"Nor bounds, nor clime, nor creed thou know'st,
Wide as man's need thy favors fall:
The white wings of the Holy Ghost
Stoop, seen or unseen, o'er the heads of all."

And therefore,

"I say to thee, do thou repeat
To the first man thou mayest meet
In lane, highway, or open street—

"That he, and we, and all men, move
Under a canopy of love,
As broad as the blue sky above:

"And if we will one Guide obey,
The dreariest path, the darkest way,
Shall issue out in heavenly day.

"And we, on divers shores now cast,
Shall meet, our perilous voyage past,
All in our Father's house at last.

"For we must count it true that Love,
Blessing, not cursing, rules above,
And that in it we live and move."

Let us heed the words of Elihu, who calls to us from Job's far-off day, "Look unto the heavens and see." We will do well to regard the Double Sky, for out of the Upper Sky comes the only sufficient encouragement for worthy and noble labor. An enthusiast in art says, "The sky bends low where a true artist works." The fact is broader than that narrow statement, for the heavens bend low and near with sympathy and help wherever any earnest and honest soul is reverently doing its duty at life's appointed tasks. In all our labor under the sun let us look up to

“the Master of all good workmen” for encouragement and inspiration and strength.

Out of the Upper Sky falls the only real and sufficient comfort for the weak and suffering. Sidney Lanier, wasting away with mortal sickness, wrote to his wife, “I thank God that in a knowledge of him I have a steadfast firmament of blue in which all clouds soon dissolve.” Shakespeare knew that “There is a Pity sitting in the heavens that looks into the bottom of our grief,” and that says, “Like as a father pitieth and as a mother comforteth, so will I.” It may be that God sometimes takes us off our feet and lays us flat, that we may have along with greater need a better opportunity and stronger inclination to look up.

Out of the Upper Sky falls the only authentic and valid peace for the penitent. Therefore, let the troubled conscience, uneasy with the consciousness of sin, look up. Over the bowed head and contrite heart there is the sound of a jubilee in the dome of heaven where the angels are making a festival. A writer in an English Review voices The Cry of the Earth-Children, sick of earth’s passing pleasures and men’s foolish praise, and of laborious days that only dig a deeper need :

“We delve within the earth, we peer
On earths beyond our own;
Dizzied with earthliness we fear,
Childlike, to be alone,

"Ever half-conscious of a need
Not met by star nor clod:
Then falls the shadow of thy deed,
Thy touch, O living God!

"We are thy children: Life's pretense
Fades from us as we weep
These bitter tears of penitence,
For pardon ere we sleep."

Colonel S. H. Hadley, who had been for twenty years a drunkard, gambler, and criminal, went into Jerry McAuley's mission one night and knelt and wept and prayed till he rose from his knees a new creature. Hear him: "I went out upon the street and looked up at the sky. I don't believe I had looked up in ten years. A drunkard never looks up; he always looks down. Now I looked up. It was a glorious starlit night, and it seemed to me I could see Jesus looking at me out of a million eyes." And looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of his faith, he laid aside every weight and the sins that had so long beset him, and ran thenceforth a glorious race.

Out of the Upper Sky shines the only steady light by which we may steer safely. A clear vision of bright and abiding spiritual realities is necessary to life's guidance. To steer by the stars is a necessity for the human voyage. The black Kroomen of the African shore jeer at the captain of a foreign ship as a star-gazer. They say: "We steer by what we know; we keep in sight of solid earth; we go from headland to headland;

we know where we are. But that fool white man steers away out of sight of land and imagines he can find out where he is and which way to go by looking at the stars through a glass. We are not foolish enough for that." Truly is it said that "Christian faith possesses all the terrestrial lights and landmarks which can be claimed by the secularist, by the personal and the social conscience, and by the teaching of human experience. But, in addition, it is endowed with the stars of Revealed Truth, and there are many days and nights when by these upper lights alone can a man discover where he is and how to steer." There come such times as Froude describes when "the compasses are all awry, the lights gone out or drifting, and nothing left to steer by but the stars." No soul ever made a safe voyage and came to the desirable haven without regarding the heavens and steering by the eternal stars that shine in the moral firmament.

Out of the Upper Sky come the impulse and empowering essential to human progress. Therefore let nations and tribes look up. The glory of mankind is of heaven and not of earth. We were made in the beginning by almighty Hands which still reach down through darkness, molding men. Let development theories say what they will—and doubtless they say much that is correct—yet it still remains true that human civilization has not been bred out of the ground like a swarm of maggots out of a dung hill, nor even like a water

lily out of black ooze, but has descended out of heaven from God like the New Jerusalem once seen in vision. Old Plutarch's penetrating discernment of the nature of things has not been improved upon, but only confirmed by subsequent ages. It was his opinion that "a city might sooner be built without any ground to fix it on than a commonwealth be constituted altogether void of religion, or being constituted, be preserved." The apothegm which we quoted at the beginning we repeat now at the end. Lacordaire, speaking of the decline of nations, said: "The earth has devoured all those who have no longer regarded heaven save as the physical eye discovers it on the horizon." The epitaph of all the men and all the nations who have really perished is brief and explicit. In the dialect and idiom of this essay, it reads: They failed to regard the Double Sky. To ignore the spiritual is death; to be spiritually minded is life, peace, and lasting prosperity.

Lamartine, the Frenchman, statesman, poet, and historian, looking with envy upon nations whose great men were like Washington and Franklin, Sidney and Cromwell, uttered this lament for his own country, which seemed to him destitute of such leaders: "The great men of *other* countries live and die on the scene of history, *looking up to heaven*; our great men appear to live and die, forgetting completely the only idea which is worth living and dying for—*they*

live and die looking at the spectator, or, at most, at posterity." Only men who fear God and care for the verdict and approval of Heaven can possibly lead nations of true greatness. Guizot, historian, statesman, and student of public affairs, when he fled from the unstability and unsafety of government in France to the shelter of stable England, said to Lord Shaftesbury, "Sir, it is their religion which has saved the English people from the ills which afflict France." A critic of Greek civilization notes that the main lines of Greek architecture are parallel with the ground, and the main channels of Greek thought followed the same course. The Greek temple merely decorates the earth. The Greek people lived only for that purpose and on that level. And because earth-decorating Hellas knew nothing higher than Olympus and Parnassus, and her gods were carnal, of the earth earthy, therefore the earth devoured her, and the glory that was Greece, like the splendor that was Rome, went drifting with its dead things down the dark of history.

THUS SAITH THE POET

"By Tigris, or the streams of Ind,
Ere Colchis rose, or Babylon,
Forgotten empires dreamed and sinned,
Setting tall towns against the dawn,

"Which, when the proud Sun smote upon,
Flashed fire for fire and pride for pride;
Their names were . . . ask oblivion! . . .
"They had no vision, and they died."

"Queens, dusk of hair and tawny skinned,
That loll where fellow leopards fawn,
Their hearts are dust before the wind,
Their loves, that shook the world, are wan . . .

"Passion is mighty . . . but, anon,
Strong Death has Romance for his bride;
Their legends . . . ask oblivion! . . .
'They had no vision, and they died.'

"Heroes, the braggart trumps that dinned
Their futile triumphs, monarch, pawn,
Wild tribesmen, kingdoms disciplined,
Passed like a whirlwind and were gone;

"They built with bronze and gold and brawn,
The inner Vision still denied;
Their conquests . . . ask oblivion! . . .
'They had no vision, and they died.'

"Dumb oracles, and priests withdrawn,
Was it but flesh they deified?
Their gods were . . . ask oblivion! . . .
'They had no vision, and they died.' "

Josiah Royce, in his most notable book, speaking of the human reason as one of the sources of religious insight, says, "Man's reason can perceive a heaven which overarches us, a heaven which sends down influences that *can transform us, that can enter into our will and give us an impulse as well as a plan of life.*" The impact of the Power which moves upon the human spirit from above is felt by the ethical sense of every well-developed soul; and the more highly sensitized a man's nature is, the more he is aware of such impact, and the more distinctly he realizes

it to be as unmistakably personal in its origin as it is spiritualizing in its effect upon his own personality. Such a soul is liable to have as vivid an experience as Russell Lowell had in one momentous hour which he thus described: "I had never before felt so clearly the Spirit of God in and around me. The whole room seemed to me full of God. The air seemed to quiver with the hovering presence of Something, I knew not what." To spell that Something with a capital is not unreasonable. It is that Power which makes for righteousness and urges man onward and upward, giving both the impulse and the power. Look up, for above the dark night the stars are shining. When the French general said to the Vendean peasant, "We will tear down your chapels, we will burn your Bibles, we will kill your clergy, we will scatter your congregations, we will destroy everything that can make you think of your God," that unperturbed peasant answered with cool and serene irony, "You will leave us the stars, won't you?" And the French man of war decided, after reflection, that he would mercifully leave them the stars. So he magnanimously restrained his almightiness from disturbing the sky; and so long as the stars shine overhead, men will think of God and down through endless generations men with uplifted faces will call to their downcast brothers, "Look unto the heavens and see." Richter said that so long as the word God endures

in human language, it will direct the eyes of men upward; and whenever men look up, they can see the name of their God and Father blazoned in shining worlds across the boundless blue dome that overarches human life.

One supreme Voice there is which calls us to look up and describes and interprets to us the contents of the spiritual heavens. It is that authoritative Voice which sounded from the Mount of Olives, and from the crest of Calvary, and now from the Heaven of heavens and in our heart of hearts. Except by heeding that Voice we know of no salvation. This Napoleon implied and confessed when he said, "The nearer I approach in my study of Christ, the more carefully I examine everything that is above me." *Ecce Cælum!* Behold the Double Sky. Above, in the Heaven of heavens, is the home of the soul, a building of God, a house not made with hands, in the realm of the eternal, up into which the ransomed spirit, freed from "this muddy vesture of decay," ascends, singing:

"Good-by, dear earthly sky!
I leave thee as the gauzy dragon-fly
Leaves the green pool to try
His vast ambition in the vaster sky."

MATTHEW ARNOLD'S APOSTOLATE

LEST the purpose of this essay be misunderstood, we distinctly disavow at the outset any disposition to disparage Matthew Arnold—a man of extraordinary inherited gifts, rare cultivation, pure character and unsullied life; nor are we vain enough to imagine that it is within our power to lower the estimate which the intelligent world puts upon him. Our sole purpose, now and here, is to discuss the nature and value of a particular type of culture, and especially to consider the wisdom and effect of Arnold's apostolate to those both inside and outside of the churches whom he called Philistines.

In view of his sharp attacks upon and stinging censures of the churches, it should not be regarded as illegitimate, rude, or improper for any representative of the churches to criticize his crusade while defending those whom he attacked.

To speak of Arnold as an apostle is not unwarranted. He regarded himself as an apostle—the Apostle to the Philistines. Mr. Frank Harris, one-time editor of the *Fortnightly Review*, called Arnold an apostle—"The latest Apostle to the Gentiles."

Acolyte and thurifer before the high altar of Christianity, bearer of lights designed to shed a better illumination in the dim temple of our mod-

ern worship, and swinger of a jeweled censer intended to diffuse fragrance through its malodorous air—such Matthew Arnold, self-appointed apostle of sweetness and light, supposed himself to be, in what was on the whole the most pretentious apostolate seen in intelligent circles in modern times—an apostolate, not from the church, but to it, and applying the most candid and cutting criticism that Christian churches have ever received from a culture which owed itself to Christianity.

It may be noted in passing that the favorite phrase of this imposing apostolate, the phrase "Sweetness and Light," was not original with Arnold, but was borrowed from Swift, who, in his *Battle of the Books*, commends the bees for their exemplary industry as producers of honey and wax, and then suggests in a moralizing way, that honey and wax-candles are fit emblems of "the two loveliest of things, sweetness and light." Spiritualizing the words, "sweetness and light," to signify beauty and intelligence, Arnold made them the text and motto of his ostentatious embassy to the churches and by incessant repetition gave wider vogue, along with higher meaning, to Swift's redolent and refulgent phrase. In particular he proclaimed that beauty and intelligence are the two elements most lacking and most needed in our current religion. Especially in one famous essay he expounded his new and better gospel of sweetness and light, Arnold's "Heav-

only Twins." That essay is in reality a study of ideals of human perfection and a setting forth of what this apostle of culture considers the true ideal. The current Christian conception of Perfection he criticizes as faulty and segmental. The perfection aimed at by the religious bodies he regards as meager and unattractive, consisting, he says, merely in conquering the faults of our animality and producing a human nature perfect only on the moral side. The true ideal, and only worthy goal of aspiration and endeavor, is, he insists, "a human nature perfect on all its sides," a manhood *teres atque rotundus*, a perfection many-sided, polished, and complete. For the source and sanction of this fine ideal he goes, not to the New Testament, but to the ancient pagan Greeks, with whose spiritual preeminence he seems profoundly impressed. He attributes what he calls "the immense spiritual superiority of the Greeks" to their being "inspired with a central and happy idea of Perfection"; and tells us that the finely tempered and harmonious perfection which the Greeks conceived of was produced by "subordinating all else to the formation of spirit and character." And surely, beyond dispute, that is the way to produce it. But do we need Arnold or the old Greeks to tell us that? Does not the most accessible of books, a little volume called the New Testament, a volume as modern as it is ancient, and more widely circulated in one year than Arnold's writings can be in a thou-

sand years, teach exactly that? Is not that its plan for producing a finely tempered and harmonious perfection, namely, by the spiritualization and refinement of man's nature through conquering the faults of his animality and subordinating everything to the formation of spirit and character? And does not Christianity furnish what Grecian culture never had, and what Matthew Arnold's personality is far from presenting, a perfect Pattern, Christ Jesus, not to mention the addition of a divine enabling by the impartation from above of a spirit of power and love and sanity? Arnold really brings us no news whatever, increases our spiritual knowledge not one whit, adds nothing to the New Testament, but, on the contrary, as will be noted later, takes something away. When this messenger, arriving from ancient Greece by way of Rugby and Oxford, labors to impress upon Christian people the transcendent beauty of "a human life aspiring with all its organs after sweetness, light, and perfection," the Christian people wonderingly reply that they learned that long ago from a Teacher greater than Arnold—greater than all Greek sages—from the one supreme authority and exemplar, the one only perfect character, living the one only perfect life, who either by his own lips or the mouth of his messengers says in substance to his disciples, "Be ye perfect, not merely in restraining your carnal nature, but in adding virtue to virtue, grace to grace, in all things lovely

and true and pure and of good report, till you attain the finished stature of perfect manhood, *teres atque rotundus*, and are presented faultless at last before the throne of His glory."

This self-appointed censor of the religious bodies, this disparager of their ideals, feels obliged to concede that the Christian churches have accomplished much good and produced much happiness, and that theirs was the most considerable movement toward Perfection extant until he launched his cult of culture; yet so imperfect do the churches seem to him that he marvels how cultivated persons can adhere to them and how vast multitudes of sane people can continue to believe in such faulty organizations, and can stand ready to support them, not only with money, but with their very life-blood, as he plainly sees to be the fact. His opinion of the ideals held and the fruits produced in character and life by the religious bodies requires strong language to express. He charges the members of those bodies with "hideousness and rawness." He wants to teach these raw persons to like what is really beautiful, graceful, and becoming; wants these "raw and unkindled masses to be touched with sweetness and light"; wants to take the vulgarity out of the religion of the churches so as to make it a really refined, respectable, genteel sort of faith such as cultivated and elegant persons like himself can consent to entertain.

Now, doubtless, it must be admitted that some of the interpreters of Christianity have set forth an unworthy and unpleasing conception of human perfection. And it is not inconceivable that a man with Arnold's gifts might be appointed by God to bring some needed reproof and rectification, and if he should really enlarge and elevate our ideals, then the human race, and most of all the religious organizations, avowedly bent on perfection, ought to be concerned to know and acknowledge the fact and confess indebtedness to him. In many things he and the most of us are entirely agreed. That the world requires and our religion should furnish, through its disciples, more sweetness and light, more intelligence and love, will hardly be denied. That the seeming lack of these was a poignant distress to him betokens in him a nature not destitute of spiritual sensitiveness, and that he lifted up his voice like a prophet calling attention to the pressing want makes him, in that respect and to that extent, a useful servant of mankind. The inexpressible desirability of the end he has in view is beyond dispute; and if he or any other man or body of men could drench and suffuse our religious organizations with larger light and love, an overjoyed and grateful Christendom would not withhold its praise.

But Arnold did not do justice to the ideals and fruits of the evangelical churches. He failed to perceive the surpassing value of a moral culture

powerful enough to subdue man's rampant animalism and to set the spiritual man triumphant over the flesh, the world, and the devil—a culture capable of taking the ape and tiger out, refining away the grossness and fierceness of untamed human nature, and producing sober, conscientious, gentle, humane, and godly lives. A conquered animality and a nature morally perfected are results not to be belittled; and the institution and method which can instrumentally achieve such results in millions of lives have some claim to be considered divine. We may express, in passing, our surprise at finding so stringent a stickler for refinement and for living in the spirit as Arnold was, attaching so little importance to conquering the faults of our animality as to say one day that he thought the coarseness and sensuality of Voltaire's writings a matter of small importance. And we do not wonder that his friend Clough turned on Arnold properly enough, in a manner rather rough, with the reproving rebuff, "Well, you don't think any better of yourself for that, I suppose"; which was a polite way of saying, "You ought to be ashamed of yourself." Certainly moral perfection which the churches aim at primarily, but not exclusively, is more important than æsthetic refinement which dominates Hellenic culture. When Newman Hall went to John Ruskin for advice as to how to build a beautiful house of worship for his congregation the great teacher of architectural art, but

greater teacher of high morals, answered somewhat quizzically and evasively but very pun-
gently, that the true way to make a really beautiful church is not by piling stones one upon another, but by "gathering together a few people who will not steal nor tell lies."

Moral perfection, and not æsthetic effect, was foremost in Ruskin's esteem, and the perfecting of human nature on the moral side was, it appears, even in the opinion of the author of *Modern Painters* and the *Stones of Venice*, the supremely urgent thing, the crowning glory as it is the prime function of the Christian Church. Most assuredly, any cult of Perfection which fails morally fails entirely. And while the evangelical churches have abundantly proved the power of their fervent faith to promote moral perfection, and are proving it this very hour, near and afar, Hellenism, which Arnold exalts above Christianity, is fatally discredited by its failure to brace the moral fiber. The ethical looseness of the Hellenic culture revived by Arnold seems to be shrewdly referred to under a veiled allusion in the irony of Zangwill's suggestion that Jezebel may very likely have wanted to put more sweetness and light into the narrow incompleteness of Elijah's and Elisha's view of life; those men of God being, to her more liberal taste, too rigidly and exclusively bent on purity, sobriety, righteousness, and godliness.

Christianity, at its beginning, met and routed

Hellenism. Christianity's spokesman at the seat and center of Hellenism was Paul on Mars' Hill. In our modern day Matthew Arnold led Hellenism to the attack again, with the same result. The Hellenic type of culture and religion fails: the Pauline conquers. In one of J. P. Mowbray's animated dialogues that vivacious, keen-witted woman Irene points out with graphic idiom how, as she sees it, the boasted superiority of Hellenic ideals went down under the blows of the tent-maker of Tarsus. She says substantially :

When Paul made his speech on Mars' Hill to the Athenians he was at close quarters with Hellenism, and he treated it as if he were a democrat and not an æsthete, bowling down all the things that Hellenic culture doted on. And he cleaned the deck, he swept the field; every one of his blows landed squarely between the Hellenic eyes.

The Athenians had a number of sensitive spots, and he hit them straight.

1. They were autochthons, born on the sacred soil of Greece, and immensely puffed up about it. And Paul said to them, "God made the whole world—it is all sacred—and all things therein."

2. They glorified architecture, and were especially vain of their temples. Paul said, "The Lord of heaven and earth dwelleth not in temples made with hands."

3. They devoted their genius to sculpture, especially admiring and adoring their statues of

gods and goddesses. Paul said, "The Godhead is not like unto gold or silver or marble graven by art and man's device."

4. They called all the rest of the world barbarians, and thought them unfit to be on the planet. Paul said, "God hath made of one blood all nations of men to dwell on the face of the earth."

5. They prided themselves on being such broad religionists as to include in their vague and impartial worship all possible divinities. Paul said, in substance: "Your worship is ignorant. God has long borne with it out of pity for the blindness of your minds. But now that the darkness is past and the true light shineth, he calls you to repent of your idolatries and to be instructed by the man Christ Jesus whom he hath raised from the dead, and in whose gracious face you may behold the light of the knowledge of the glory of the true and living God." Irene says that while she was reading Paul's sentences she kept saying "Biff," "Biff," at the end of each one, as his straight hard blows struck home, and the dainty fond ideals of Hellenic culture fell down into the dust.

One cardinal mistake of Matthew Arnold, the would-be reformer of our holy religion, was in thinking that the faith of our fathers and of his father could be improved by eliminating the anthropomorphic and miraculous out of Christian history and interpretation. Under this delusion he liberally blue-penciled the Bible, and then pre-

sented us with what he called "the scheme of Christianity cleared of objections"; and he cleared it of "objections" in such a way as to provoke from Mr. Gladstone the remark, in *Studies Subsidiary to the Works of Bishop Butler*, that Arnold "combined a professed concern for the Christian religion with a not less boldly avowed determination to transform it beyond possibility of recognition by friend or foe." He ran his shears through Christian Scripture, "cutting out as anthorpomorphic and legendary," says Gladstone, "nearly all which its readers believe to be the heart and center of its vital force." That what he wished to extirpate is of the very essence of Christianity as a system of truth derived from a divine Source and possessing supernatural sanctions, is plain even to a rationalistic naturalist like John Burroughs, who sees clearly that the part which Arnold tries to get rid of is the very element which makes Christianity a power for good over mankind, the part which is most true and dear to men's hearts, which takes the deepest hold upon their spirits, and is most potent in inspiring effort and controlling conduct; that what Arnold wanted to do for religion was equivalent to stripping the tree of its leaves and leaving it to perish as surely as if he had cut it down; that his attempted service to the Christian public was like burning their temple and offering them the ashes; and that Arnold's sublimated extract of Christianity is no more Chris-

tianity than a vial of attar of roses is the city of Damascus, set amid its glorious gardens, radiant with color, musical with tinkling fountains, bright with the gleam of swift rivers, verdurous with living beauty and teeming with population on the desert's edge.

When a man transfers theism from a person to a power, substituting in place of a Personal Deity a stream of tendency, how much of Christianity can he retain? Arnold failed to make himself a welcome apostle to the religious bodies to whom he offered his impoverishing services. His reforms and methods were unacceptable and even offensive. The churches, which he wished to sweeten and enlighten, felt that the effect of his effort to transform Christianity was not to transfigure it into greater glory, but, rather, to diminish, devitalize, and darken it—to take the sunshine out of its atmosphere and produce such a climate as might make a Christian Hamlet say, "The air bites shrewdly, it is very cold," and a Christian Horatio shiveringly assent, "It is a nipping and an eager air." More than this, his irreverent handling of hallowed beliefs was shocking to the reverent and devout, and his disdainful bearing toward pious souls left in them a sore sense of personal injury. George Jackson truly says: "Few men of our day have given so much needless pain to so many Christian people, or have uttered so many wild and whirling words with such a demure recklessness, as Matthew Ar-

nold." His attitude toward the religious bodies and their cherished faith made him seem to the churchgoing good man on the street more like a gargoyle scowling under the cathedral eaves than like a rapt saint standing on the pinnacle with upturned face and lifted finger pointing men to heaven. Arnold made Christian people feel as did Catherine of Russia when she said of Riviere, the French physiocrat: "He supposed we Russians walked on all fours, and very politely he took the trouble to come from La Martinique to teach us how to stand on our hind legs."

Yet his proposed innovations were rather irritating because of their spirit and manner, than alarming because of their dangerousness, for Goldwin Smith truly says, that though this "jaunty gentleman did something in his light airy way with his silver shafts to forward theological disintegration," yet he was "rather a connoisseur and a dilettant than a serious philosopher or theologian," and from the standpoint of thorough scholarship his criticism of accepted Christian conceptions and traditions was too amateurish to be taken seriously. He is by no means an authority in religion, philosophy, or biblical criticism, but, rather, a literary critic, a writer of close grain and hard finish, an artist in crystalline and finely beveled sentences, a poet, and a master of pellucid and polished prose; a doctor of letters, but only a dabbler in divinity. True, he thought himself an expert with excep-

tional qualifications, natural and acquired, for revising and improving current Christianity; but intelligent Christendom, having had plenty of time to think it over, does not so regard him; and after all his labor—after his copious outpouring of alleged saccharine luminosity—Christian churches decline to accept the new gospel according to Matthew, son of Thomas Arnold—the gospel desupernaturalized, eviscerated, and devitalized—as a substitute for the old Gospel, according to Matthew, the evangelist, the glorious Gospel of the blessed God, with the splendor of its supernaturalism undimmed.

Arnold's revised and improved Christianity seemed to the religious bodies, to whom he offered it, to be a mutilated and minimized Christianity; just as ex-President Eliot's proposed religion of the future is not a new religion, but is, as has been said, "a denial of the faith and a rejection of the principles which have been the foundation of Christianity and civilization for twenty centuries." The most reverend and solemn sanctities of the Christian faith Arnold treats at times with airy irreverence. In the very Holy of holies he stands unawed, with head unbowed and knee unbended. The Holy Trinity—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit—he travesties as "The three Lord Shaftesburys." His mood and attitude at times toward Jesus the Saviour justified J. P. Mowbray in saying that "one of Arnold's defects was a dilettante spirit of irreverence," and that he,

like Renan, carried this spirit into the most august themes: that they both captured and brought back to their respective studios the historic Jesus and there posed him in æsthetic radiance: that Renan, having posed him in a warm, sensuous light, calls him "The charming teacher," and says that Jesus, in the midst of his atoning agony, "is thinking of the charming girls of Galilee"; and that Arnold posed Jesus in an Oxford peplum and exclaimed, "Behold sweet reasonableness with a secret. At last we have an intuition without an imperative. How debonaire!" Frank Harris, editor of the *Fortnightly Review*, reports Arnold as saying to him: "Renan was always my teacher, my teacher in the view he took of Saint Paul and the Bible generally"; and the editor adds, "To the end he remained a sort of lesser Renan, Renan at second-hand, a puritanic Renan."

We are told by some that Arnold was not so much an apostle to the churches as a missionary to outsiders and unbelievers; that his purpose in "clearing Christianity of objections" by a rationalized and moderated version thereof was to make it acceptable to the fastidious children of a dainty culture and the deniers of the supernatural. It seems that one of his aims in disrobing and redressing Christianity was to make it more presentable in polite society. He belonged, says one, to a group of Englishmen who toddled after Renan and picked up

his doubts; but, being too well bred to be brutal in his skepticism, and conceiving himself to have an irenic mission, Arnold used finesse and diplomatically played the impartial host, both to Belief and to Denial, saying on the one hand to Christianity, "If you will only drop your distinctive characteristics and adapt yourself to the company"—saying on the other hand to Negation, "If you will only borrow some of the things which Christianity, in deference to my wise suggestion, has dropped"—and then saying to both, "I don't see now why both of you cannot hereafter get along amicably and respectably in good society." The most objectionable feature of this maladroit intermediation, this fatuous and sinister diplomacy, is the process of reduction it applies to Christianity, reducing it so far as to render it powerless and worthless for the work it undertakes, while not reducing it far enough to command the favor and acceptance of the unbelievers. Thus both his advisory apostolate to the churches and his propitiatory mission to the skeptics proved equally futile. The fact is his was a literary and not a religious mission, as he himself unwittingly confessed when he told the Authors' Club in New York that only the literary class had understood and sustained him; to that class alone had he any really very important message. Though even in literature he was by no means infallible—as witness his judgment that "Enoch Arden" is probably Tennyson's best.

If fuller explanation of Arnold's failure is desired, I know not how it may be better obtained than by a direct study of the man himself, since he was not only the apostle and advocate, but also the embodiment and manifesto of his own type of culture. Arnold having said that Swift, who invented the phrase, "sweetness and light," was himself deficient in sweetness, there can be no impropriety in raising the question here whether the elements were so mixed in Arnold as to give the world assurance of exceptional sweetness. And we cannot proceed far with such an inquiry before we begin to feel that this apostle is not preeminently fitted for his mission.

To begin with, a deep, broad, generous love for men, as men, is wanting. Mere human nature was not dear to him and so he did not crave association with it. He never played the comrade with mankind; never brothered with the human race on a level; never marched in the ranks, touching elbows, but chose to sit up on the reviewing stand, representing inspectorship and authority. A eupatrid, eminently high-born, he kept himself aloft and aloof from the mass of men, standing always for the social and intellectual aristocracy, and wearing a patrician air. The circle of his acquaintance was intentionally narrow, and his friendships eclectically homogeneous. In his preferences and intercourse he belonged to that archaic provincial world where the fences are up. His preju-

dices bristled like a *cheval-de-frise* between him and large classes of civilized and honorable men; and the tolerant largeness of a genuinely cosmopolitan spirit was all beyond him. Brunetière is by no means a fanatical moralist, yet such aloofness and alienation as Arnold manifested Brunetière characterizes as "immoral." He pronounces art immoral to the extent of its isolating tendency; and observes that the effect of the over-refinement of the artist's æsthetic sensibilities is often to estrange him from his fellow men whom he habitually speaks of as "the crowd," "the herd." Even this French critic's moral sense feels such unbrotherliness to be anti-social, inhuman, immoral; and counts it a thing to be reprobated by civilized humanity when a man speaks harshly and contemptuously of a large body of his fellow citizens who are mostly conscientious and upright, kindly and benevolent, quite as respectable in every relation of life as he himself can be. This isolating tendency in Matthew Arnold's type of culture gives a taint of the inhuman and, Brunetière says, "of the immoral." Its evil spirit of disdain is like that which made Flaubert say in his correspondence with George Sand that the common people are always hateful. It reminds us of a certain Roman in the time of Nero, who is said to have had a two-fold contempt for the crowd—first, as an æsthetic person; second, as an aristocrat.

Matthew Arnold's culture did not save him

from giving now and then an impression of intellectual prudishness, dyspeptic daintiness, and if not effeminacy, at least a want of robustness. We cannot help wondering why a stalwart and bearded man, six feet high, should go about in the human crowd and crush, holding a handkerchief and a vinaigrette to his nostrils. We honestly think Arnold made an excessive display of his disgusts. Much of the time his nose was in the air and his facial expression like that worn by a stranger railroading across the Hackensack salt meadows when the train is opposite the fertilizer factory, and the traveler, ignorant of the nature and location of the cause, eyes his nearest fellow passengers, one by one, accusingly. He played to excess the part of a "Martyr of Disgust." Moreover, the frequent and unrestrained expression of his squeamish displeasure and dislikes seems to us to indicate a want of true refinement as well as lack of self-control. A bright woman is quoted as saying, "Mat Arnold was not a masculine writer. He was too sweet for anything. He wanted even the Scriptures candied. He could not quote the Sermon on the Mount without adding syrup to it."

We all remember that this fastidious gentleman's worst *bête noir* was vulgarity. George Eliot once wrote: "If there is one attitude more odious to me than any other of the many attitudes of 'knowingness,' it is the air which it sometimes assumes of superiority to the vulgar." Now, this

air and attitude were more fully developed and sustained in Matthew Arnold than in any other man of modern times. The abominable prevalence of vulgarity affected him like the presence of a loathsome and contagious disease. "Americans," he says, "have it horribly." Matthew Arnold says that he was sitting in his study one morning when the butler showed in an American lady and a small boy. The lady said: "Glad to make your acquaintance, Mr. Arnold. I have often heard of you. No, don't trouble to speak, sir! I know how valuable your time is!" Then, turning to the boy, she said, "This is him, Lenny, the leading critic and poet. Somewhat fleshier than we had been led to expect!" But there is a query wandering up and down this Western land whether the lofty gentleman, who twice deigned to visit us, largely for lucre's sake, was so far exalted as he imagined above the average American or Briton. It is whispered in some places that his speech and manners were not always gentle, but sometimes quite rude. It is affirmed that, at a select dinner given in his honor in a private house in one of our chief centers of culture, he was surly and petulant, finding fault even with the food set before him by his host. Certain it is that he impressed some refined and educated persons as being deficient in delicacy and good breeding. For particulars, inquire of the families of the Andover professors and a prominent publisher in Boston. In manners as

in literature he fell short at times of that "good taste," which, in Lowell's admirable words, "is the conscience of the mind, as conscience is the good taste of the soul"; good taste being the sense of what is fit and therefore ought to be, and conscience being the sense of what ought to be and is therefore fit. Arnold's culture failed to give him the Christlike faculty of being sympathetically one with those whom he tried to correct and instruct. When Stuart Mill said he thought Bentham "almost entirely wanting in sympathy and imagination so that a very large proportion of the springs of human action were unknown or incomprehensible to him," a candid fellow Briton remarked that Mill himself closely resembled his master Bentham in lacking the imagination and sympathy which would enable him to understand human nature. And Arnold must be classed with Mill and Bentham in this respect, for he also was deficient in the sympathy which comprehends. All of them had little of the faculty emphasized in Charles Reade's great book *Put Yourself in His Place*, a faculty which is necessary to practical intelligence and leadership—as was illustrated in the fact that Cardinal Vaughan's lack of Cardinal Manning's intuitive sympathy with all sorts and conditions of men made it impossible for Vaughan to become anything more than the nominal primate of Romanism in Great Britain. It may be set down as an axiom that in the human and spiritual realm he who does

not love cannot comprehend. Matthew Arnold, while thoroughly at home with the principalities and powers of literature, was not intimately acquainted with flesh and blood. That inseeing faculty, the imagination, was retained mostly in the service of his intellect and was but little at the disposal of his heart. Many and great have been the mistakes of a cold and self-sufficient intelligence, taking no account of that great sentimental human deep, whose mysterious currents of feeling set irresistibly along the coasts of life, and in which ineradicable instinctive convictions are in solution as salt is in the sea. Always the cold man is a deficient man, disqualified to appraise aright anything in human nature or human nature's universe. The heart when it is pure makes fewer mistakes than the mind. It is an error to suppose that coldness and dryness, in the observer or in the atmosphere, insure correct vision, much less complete vision. The cold, dry air of purely intellectual regions is not free from refractions and reflections, distortions and phantasmic illusions; even on the icy Brocken there is a specter; even in the dry desert men see mirages. It is in the calm and the cool that science affects to pursue its search; but even the astronomer, aloft in the night-air on his tower, reckoning and registering the stars, is liable to see what is called "a ghost," and to report, as Struvé did in the case of Procyon's alleged companion-star, a world which is not there. His

position is high and dry enough, the air is cold and quiet enough, his temper is sober and scientific enough; but he is deceived, and what he reports as a star is a mere appearance, due to an interior flaw in the lens, or a reflection on the surface of the glass, or a drop of dew like a tear in the telescope's eye. It is on a cold temper and a dry unemotional atmosphere that skepticism for the most part frames its doubts and denials, yet it misses the facts often, and wanders away after delusions. The stoniest and frostiest skeptic regarding orthodox religion whom I ever knew fell an easy prey to the spiritualists, turned his home into a bedlam with midnight séances, spirit-rappings and table-tippings, till his wife and two of his children went raving crazy with horror of the pseudo-supernatural, victims of the crass ignorance and raw credulity of unbelief.

But most of all, it is in judging of and dealing with human nature and life that the cool, unsympathetic critic, looking through the dry air of pride or indifference, is sure to miss the mark and be self-deceived. The windows through which such a man looks out on life are so frosted by the temperature within that he cannot see clearly. A man of acute and ambitious mind, linked with an ungenerous soul, will come to mean conclusions and deal unfairly with his kind. Matthew Arnold's inability to comprehend men impairs the value of many of his opinions. Unable to judge justly, his verdicts were often unduly

harsh. While there is no warrant for going the length of the French saying, "To know all is to pardon all," yet assuredly, in order to equitable judgment, one must have not only knowledge of the facts, but ability to comprehend the nature of the case and the actors therein; and in order to do justly it is necessary to love mercy as well as to walk humbly before God. Misjudging his fellow men, underestimating their qualities and capabilities, Arnold distrusted their competency, their judgment, their motives, lacking faith in what Tennyson finely calls "the common-sense of most."

From the facts above noted it follows inevitably that Arnold's influence was small and his endeavors mostly ineffectual with the classes he took to task and scolded and tried to educate—the puritans, dissenters, evangelicals, middle-classes, and so on through the whole range of his well-nigh catholic antipathies. Intellectual superiority without sympathy is powerless to uplift the thoughts, broaden the views, or awaken convictions in the minds of men. In the nature of things, a critic whose appreciations are lukewarm and his indignations scorching hot, who writes upon the epidermis of his respectable neighbors with a pencil of lunar caustic, and whose irony might almost peel the skin from an Egyptian mummy, will not be an influential teacher, nor a persuasive leader, nor a successful reformer, however eloquently he may

lecture on the supreme importance of persuasiveness and charm. And a culture inspired by fastidiousness of taste, made up of delicate predilections and sniffing prejudices, ruled by aristocratic affinities, which cut a man off from his brethren and alienate him from the human mass; a culture which stands aloof from common life and extends its favors at the end of a pole; a culture which manifests, as Emily Dickinson phrases it, "a refined horror of freckled human nature"; a culture which offensively obtrudes its own superiority, and uses a tone of impatience which means, "You stupid creatures, you ought to be cultivated, but you're not, and I almost despair of making you so; O cursed spite that ever I was born to set you right!"—the faintest suspicion of such an attitude and spirit is enough to make any culture obnoxious and offensive to those whom its intrusions vex and its supercilious airs exasperate. And the culture which Arnold preached as an improvement on current Christianity had enough of this tone and temper to make the futility and failure of his apostleship stand as a warning to dainty and aristocratic preachers and teachers for all time to come.

As to the personal temper and disposition of our apostle of sweetness, Mr. Gladstone observed in him, instead of exceptional charm and persuasiveness, a querulous disposition, "a spirit of objection," "an ungovernable bias toward finding fault." And the same trait was in Louis Ste-

venson's mind when, at his Samoan refuge in the soft air of the South Pacific, his own fragile life hanging by a slender and fast-fraying thread, Stevenson received the news that Matthew Arnold had suddenly gone to meet his Maker, and then, with reverent seriousness, said, slowly and gently, "I'm sorry for Arnold; he won't like God"—shrewdest and most trenchant comment ever made on our modern Professor of the Gentle Art of Finding Fault. Even the most amiable of Arnold's contemporaries were annoyed by his censorious magisterial manner as he went stalking about through Christendom in austere perpendicularity with the air of a displeased school inspector, and with such general reluctance to approve as recalls Sydney Smith's thrust at Jeffrey, when he told Jeffrey to his face that he would expect him to condemn the solar system—"badly lighted, planets too distant, pestered with comets, feeble contrivance—could make a better myself with great ease."

Arnold seems to have said within himself, "Go to; the world is my schoolhouse; I will straightway instruct mankind." And it is difficult to refrain from thinking him a victim of "the Great Teacher conceit," to which the *Saturday Review* referred when, in characterizing the degenerate, pessimistic cynic, Nordau, it called him "a self-assertive, overbearing, conceited creature, bitten by the Great Teacher mania," and added that "self-conceit and obstinate self-assertion have

been common phenomena in the professed Great Teachers since the beginning of things." Certain it is that Matthew Arnold had the propensities of a pedagogue in an exaggerated degree. In season and out of season he lectured mankind as if they were his pupils and he their natural and necessary instructor. Alfred Austin noticed that "Arnold frowned even in his very earliest verse, frowned as a teacher might who thinks he has discovered that everything is going amiss in the school it is his mission to conduct." Habitually he wears a pedagogic scowl, and the air of his schoolhouse is jarred by sharp reprimands and frequent whacks of the ferule. He puts the fool's cap on most of his scholars, and reminds us of Cable's nervous schoolmaster who, when a dull class was reciting, after sending one pupil after another to the tail of the class, at last exclaimed in a burst of hysterical impatience, "Ze whole class go to ze foot." Herbert Spencer often apologized for his own extremely critical and exacting disposition by attributing it to the fact that he came of a race of schoolmasters. "A schoolmaster," he said, "is always correcting or ^{*}finding fault with somebody."

It may be said that Matthew Arnold, being the son of the great master of Rugby, came naturally enough by his pedagogic habit of mind; but between father and son there was a noticeable difference. Thomas Arnold's school-mastering, whatever his personal defects, was manifestly

impelled by love and flooded with sympathy. This did two things—it gave him an intuitive understanding of those whom he taught, for love, far from being blind, is the only Argus with a hundred eyes to see everything that is worth seeing; and also it drew his pupils to him in fond confidence and held them fast in bonds of reverent affection. For an authentic picture of Arnold, senior, we can desire nothing better than is given in young Arthur Penrhyn Stanley's letters written home from Rugby, which tells of Thomas Arnold's thanking the boys with happy tears in his eyes at the close of a semester, for the way they had done their work, and putting so much strong tenderness into his last sermons that the students could see his words were meant for some who were going away and especially for one boy whose moral welfare he was very anxious about; and being so moved while delivering an ordinary sermon on a common occasion in Rugby chapel that his voice failed him, and closing abruptly, he bent down his head in the pulpit and sobbed like a child. The boy Stanley, under the effect of that sermon, wrote home to his sister, "I never saw anything that gave me more an idea of an inspired man. . . . He is certainly the very best preacher I ever heard or could wish to hear." We are not aware that the younger and severer Arnold had a heart capable of melting like that; and we cannot help wishing that we could find flowing down the slope of his schoolmastering,

making it verdurous and bloomy, a little rill of that tenderness which welled copiously from the sweet fountains of his father's soul; if only he had beamed with genial warmth upon his fellow men—how much more we could have loved him! Better for a man to wear his heart upon his sleeve than to leave his fellow men in doubt whether he has any.

Matthew himself felt and wrote correctly that what made his father great was "that he was not only a good man, saving his own soul by righteousness, but that he carried so many others with him in his hand and saved them, if they would let him, along with himself"; a saying which recalls to us the saintly old preacher in Jean Ingelow's "Brothers and A Sermon," so "anxious not to go to heaven alone." It was because such things were not wanting in the kindlier, warmer, and more cordial Arnold that his influence was so wide and so subduing, and that the son, when in America, found, as he says, his "father's memory a living power still in that New Hampshire community at Dartmouth College," as he might also have found it in many another institution in this western land. Nothing is more certain than that a querulous and scolding teacher, minister, or missionary is foredoomed to failure. When a man imagines himself to be an illuminator, a burning and a shining light and a diffuser of fragrance, a perfumed pastille burning in the House of Life, his no-

tion is negatived and his mission nullified if his personality exudes an acrid humor and his effluence is as smoke to the eyes and as vinegar to the teeth.

That master-critic, Professor C. T. Winchester, of Wesleyan, rightly says, "The surest proof of a critic's ability is to be found in his verdicts upon his contemporaries." Dr. Noah Porter, of Yale, noted that John Stuart Mill's cold, self-centered, and unsympathetic temper showed itself especially in his depreciatory estimates of most of his contemporaries. This same unsympathetic spirit is similarly manifested by our apostle of sweetness in his harsh comment upon not a few men most distinguished in the literature of his time both in England and in America. Such comments abound in his volume, *Friendship's Garland*, in which numerous persons are characterized in such a way as leads John Burroughs to call it "a garland made up mainly of nettles"; a fair sample being this garland of nettles for the brow of Mr. Sala: "He blends the airy epicureanism of the *salons* of Augustus with the full-bodied gayety of our English cider-cellar." When a new volume of *Modern Painters* appeared, the author of "Sweetness and Light" commented on Ruskin thus: "The man and his character too febrile, irritable, and weak to allow him to possess the *ordo concatenatioque veri*." When Arnold's sister told him he was be-

coming as dogmatic as Ruskin, Arnold answered that the difference between them was that Ruskin was dogmatic and *wrong*. Even toward Tennyson his tone is almost contemptuous. He feels but slight interest in the Laureate's work, he says, and his conviction is firm that Tennyson will not finally take a high rank in literature. With his usual chivalrous magnanimity he once wrote, "I do not think Tennyson a great or powerful spirit in any line; the real truth is he is deficient in intellectual power." But while he put a low estimate on Tennyson, he evidently regarded himself as a superior intellectual and literary force, for, as the *Evening Post* once said, Arnold always "analyzed his own poetical powers and prospects with undisguised self-respect." It is perfectly plain that he thought himself Tennyson's superior as a thinker and a poet. No wonder Tennyson, on being asked if he would like to have Matthew Arnold invited to a London dinner party that was being arranged for, answered that he "didn't much like dining with gods." The *Fortnightly* said editorially: "Arnold believed himself both a poet and prose-writer of the first rank. He said more than once: 'Tennyson has no ideas, Browning's are hidden under scoriæ; *my* poems are of gold, seven times refined.' In this self-estimate he was mistaken. He was, rather, a poet of distilled distinction and sterilized cultivation than of inspiration, passion, and power.

By intellect shall no man storm heaven: the great of heart alone do that."

Arnold's self-reverence exceeded his self-knowledge, and reminds us of Zangwill's humorous saying that, "the way Mr. Stead believes in himself is quite refreshing in these atheistic times when some men believe in no god at all." It is undeniable that Matthew Arnold manifested the temper and temperature which made London society nickname Monckton Milnes (Lord Houghton) "The cool of the evening," and which made an irreverent wag say of Dr. Thompson, master of Trinity College, "He casteth forth his ice like morsels; who can stand before his cold?" Arnold's coldness never seemed more heartless than in the hour when all England was startled by Thackeray's being found dead in bed the morning before Christmas, 1863. In that very hour, under the first shock of the tidings, the great apostle of sweetness wrote, with spiteful promptitude, his immediate and almost only word concerning the still uncoffined dead, "I cannot say that I thoroughly liked him, and he is not, to my thinking, a great writer." A thorny sprig, indeed, without flower or even leaf, to fling on the breast of a corpse still almost warm enough to bleed—a tribute frosty enough to hasten the *rigor mortis*.

A subsequent recrudescence of genuine Arnoldian sweetness was in W. E. Henley's sneer at the deepening seriousness and religiousness

which marked Louis Stevenson's closing years at Samoa, when Henley, on whose sickness and loneliness Stevenson had once bestowed no little tenderness, wrote, "The Samoan Stevenson is too self-righteous a beast for me." The man who could perpetrate that over his dead friend should be sentenced to live with himself, alone, forever. He showed himself less noble than Stevenson, and Florence Earl Coates is right in her verses:

"Had Henley died, his course half run—
Had Henley died and Stevenson
 Been left on earth, of him to write,
 He would have chosen to indite
His name in generous phrase—or none."

"Ah, well! at rest—poor Stevenson!—
Safe in our hearts his place is won.
 There love shall still his love requite:
 His faults divinely veiled from sight,
Whose tears had fallen in benison,
 Had Henley died!"

Arnold similarly endeared himself to his American contemporaries by the way in which he caressed them with his claws. Concerning James Russell Lowell's brilliant and triumphant address at Birmingham, in 1884, on "Democracy," which forced the admiration of aristocratic England, and was loudly praised even by the London Times, Arnold remarked with entire absence of enthusiasm, "I feel the want of body and current in the discourse as a whole."

In one of his Essays, Arnold, with character-

istic suavity and moderation, had referred to Henry Ward Beecher as "a heated barbarian." Years afterward, when he heard Mr. Beecher in his own pulpit in Brooklyn, the Plymouth Church preacher was so decorous that Arnold thought he must have been on his good behavior that morning—perhaps constrained by the presence of so formidable a critic. And that same Sunday, in the afternoon, he wrote home to his sister: "Ward Beecher told me that I had taught him much; that he had read my rebukes of him too, and that they had done him good. Nothing could be in better taste than what he said." Arnold's habit of harping on good taste, appearing in this connection, recalls what Victor Hugo wrote to Lacoussade: "Those who talk most about taste in these days are the people who have least of it." Such high commendation of Beecher's taste as was bestowed by the nineteenth-century's chief prelector on taste might have made the Brooklyn pastor regard it as a boon had he been permitted to survive his critic and to read in Arnold's published *Letters* the patronizing praise from his self-complacent English auditor; although, after reading it, the lion of Plymouth pulpit might scratch his humble head and try to remember what it was that Lowell wrote about "A Certain Condescension in Foreigners."

When Max Müller, who knew Arnold well, tells us that "he could be very patronizing," we

have no difficulty in believing it. Nor can we wonder much when Leslie Stephen, in his *Studies of a Biographer*, speaking of Arnold, with whom he was personally intimate, and noting some of his sharp sayings, writes: "I confess that on several trying occasions in my life I have wished that I had a little sweetness and light in me, so that I, too, might be able to say nasty things about my enemies." And yet the sweet gentleman, whose friends talk thus about him, strenuously emphasized to his contemporaries the beauty of urbanity, the necessity of cultivating persuasiveness and charm, and at Oxford they still talk of his "sweet reasonableness." He is the same man whose graces evoked from one admirer the effusive statement that "only a thousand years of England could produce an Arnold"; the same man in whom, Canon Farrar said, we behold "The sum of fair six thousand years' tradition of civility." There are circles still where the name of Matthew Arnold is sacrosanct, where criticism of him is sacrilege, and his image is set up as an ikon for adulation and osculation.

Arnold tells us that, in a day when Bentham was loudly cried up as the renovator of modern society, whose ideas ought to guide and govern the future, he—Arnold—read in Bentham's *Deontology* Bentham's depreciation of the wisdom of Socrates and Plato; and, from the moment of reading that, Arnold was delivered from

the possibility of being in mental bondage to Bentham; he felt, he says, the inadequacy of Bentham's mind for supplying to human society any wise and perfect rule. In like manner, when we read Arnold's disparagement of such men as Ruskin and Tennyson, Thackeray, Lowell, and the rest, we lost whatever confidence we may have had in Arnold's wisdom, fair-mindedness, discernment, sense, sanity, and good taste.

John Foster knew some people whose "sensibilities were a mere bundle of aversions." He would have found in Arnold a person whose antipathies, predominating over his sympathies, bristled against entire classes of his fellow men like quills upon the fretful porcupine.

His most vehement and vociferous antipathy is toward the Middle Class. Much to the mar-
ring of page 35 of the essay on "Sweetness and Light," he repeats the phrase "middle class" eight times in a space of nineteen lines, reprobating "middle-class liberalism," "middle-class parliaments," "middle-class vestries," "middle-class industrialists," "middle-class dissent," and "middle-class Protestantism."

Everything "middle class" is repulsive. He dislikes Cobden because he is a representative of the middle class, and Hepworth Dixon's literary style because it is "middle-class Macaulayese." He is disgusted, he says, at "the immense vulgar-mindedness and real inferiority of the English middle class." But probably Kip-

ling is nearer the truth when he says in "The Drums of the Fore and Aft," that "God has arranged that a clean-run youth of the British middle class shall, in the matter of backbone, brains, and bowels, surpass all other youths." It is in the middle class mostly that Arnold finds the British "Philistine," whom he despises, abhors, and unmercifully belabors. One of the worst things which he finds in the middle class is their *dissentingness*, which is to Arnold as the noisome pestilence. He speaks of a certain daily newspaper as being "a true reflexion of the rancor of Protestant Dissent in alliance with all the vulgarity, meddlesomeness and grossness of the British multitude." Stopford Brooke says, "Arnold almost hated Nonconformists." His haughty *ex cathedra* tone toward Dissenters is worthy of the Pope of Rome, toward whom, by the way, it is clear, he feels more tolerance and affiliation. His writings make us certain that he would rather be a papist than a Congregationalist, Presbyterian, or Methodist. From an aristocratic clubhouse in London he writes to his mother, "I mean to deliver the middle class out of the hands of their dissenting ministers." Whether he means to deliver them over to the Anglican Establishment or to the deputy-deity on the Tiber or to his own Church of Modern Culture of which he was the self-elected pontiff, he does not intimate, and we are left to conjecture. Once, for a wonder, he so far forgets his intolerance as to recognize a

superior and saving value in the influence of Dissenters, when, speaking of Oxford University, he expresses the hope that "the infusion of Dissenters' sons, of that muscular, hardworking, unblasé class—for this it is," he says, "spite of its abominable disagreeableness—may brace the flaccid sinews of Oxford a little." Can it be that the soft, luxurious, and blasé circles of aristocratic culture need to be and can be braced by an infusion of intellectual robustness, moral decision, and active energy from the ranks of the Dissenters? Arnold had to concede it, and we incline to agree with him when we look on the one side at the general intellectual impotence and sterility of the dainty and self-indulgent classes, and on the other at the range of mental virility, fecundity, and force included between Herbert Spencer and Rudyard Kipling, both hereditary products of one section of Dissenters, the Wesleyan Methodists; and again, when we hear W. Robertson Nicoll reporting that, by the general testimony of booksellers, the Nonconformists are the great book-buyers of England; and yet again, when we hear one of the most eminent publishers in London saying that he sometimes thinks there is scarcely anything vital and powerful in the English life of to-day that has not proceeded from some Nonconformist home. But in spite of all this, the cult of modern culture still apes Arnold's Anglican cant even in America, where there is least excuse for

it. In criticizing a popular drama William Winter used this acrid phrase, "The stoniest Dissenter that ever soured the milk in an English middle-class household," in which expression, if it was meant seriously, we get the true Arnoldian flavor of puckery green-persimmon juice.

Arnold's antipathy toward Dissenters extends also to all *Evangelicals*, Anglican as well as Nonconformist, the Evangelicals outside the Anglican body differing in his esteem from those inside only, as the old Edinburgh Review said, in the "finer shades and nicer discriminations of lunacy," and, as Arnold would add, in somewhat direr degrees of disagreeableness. His dislike of Evangelicals made him call Bunyan "a Philistine seer," an epithet which strikes Professor Woodberry as containing more vinegar and darkness than sweetness and light. Such an Evangelical as Lord Ashley, seventh Earl of Shaftesbury, was to Arnold an obnoxious type—Shaftesbury, the churchman who consorted in the unity of the spirit and the bonds of love with Spurgeon and Moody for the saving of the multitudes—Shaftesbury, the nobleman, who spent himself and his wealth for the poor and the vicious, the friendless and the oppressed—Shaftesbury, whose great heart exulted with holy joy, in his honored old age, in being able to say, "In thirty years we have taken one hundred and twenty thousand waifs and strays off the streets of London and found honest employment and decent

homes for them"—Shaftesbury, whose inexpressibly beautiful and immeasurably beneficent life-work poured floods of light and sweetness into uncounted thousands of dark and embittered lives in regions which never saw the face nor so much as knew the name of Matthew Arnold—Shaftesbury, the ardent Evangelical, who so manifestly belonged to the glorious company of the apostles of Christ-like sweetness that to say his very garments smelled of myrrh, and aloes, and cassia, from the ivory palaces of the King of Love, is something more than rhetoric. Pusey said, "We love the Evangelicals because they love our Lord"; but Arnold thrust out his tongue and threw his spear at whole multitudes of devout people who fervently loved the Lord, and who, by his own concession, "had strongly loved religion, which is indeed the most lovable of all things." It is as probable that in some instances his arrogant self-conceit caused him to despise his spiritual superiors as it is certain that his arrows were sometimes sharp in the hearts of the King's friends. This apostle of sweetness and light accused evangelical religion of lacking sweetness and light, beauty and intelligence. And if we may take a particular manifestation of evangelical religion, it seems not improper to say that doubtless if he had lived in the days of Wesley, he would have emptied the vials of his scorn on the startling and phenomenal religious revival which then swept over England; but the

impartial historian J. R. Green, looking back, sees in that memorable evangelical revival an unparalleled outburst, a divine apocalypse of sweetness and light—a light, rich in calorific, actinic, and vivific rays—a sweetness which, wherever it was admitted, banished the bitterness of pride from the hearts of the haughty and the bitterness of envious hatred from the hearts of the lowly, turning the palatial home of Lady Huntingdon into a public house of prayer and washing the grimy faces of colliers clean with their own streaming tears of repentance. Surely that was a radiant and fragrant time, when, in the fine words of Fletcher, “Practical Religion, leaning on her fair daughters, Truth and Love, took a solemn walk through the Kingdom and gave a foretaste of Heaven to all that entertained her.” The historian Green, not a Wesleyan, after speaking of the marvelous moral and spiritual illumination brought to the entire life of England by that mighty and blessed awakening, says, as if with Arnold’s favorite phrase in mind, “Charles Wesley came to add sweetness to this sudden startling light.” Certain it is that the joyous spirit which inspired the songful soul of Charles Wesley did cause that bright new day to ring with choral gladness, making then and ever since a sweeter music to the sad hearts of sinful and weary men than could all the old philosophies that ever sang on Argive heights; and the sacred poetry of that hallowed, wonderful

time has carried more sweetness to the lives of millions in all lands and in all communions than the whole of Arnold's poetry and prose. The hymnals of all churches, from then till now, recognize the perennial sweetness of "the Wesleyan hymns which," as James Freeman Clarke, a Unitarian, has said, "spring pure and transparent like some divine water out of the ground of Christian experience."

From the eighteenth century until the twentieth, is it not the liberating, purifying, elevating, and enlightening influence of evangelical Christianity rather than any fastidious aristocratic culture, which has made possible the sound intellectual as well as the wholesome moral life of modern English civilization, as surely as the warm gulf-stream washing England's coasts makes possible its physical life? Indeed, the so-called culture which assumes to criticize evangelical Christianity owes itself, its training, and its critical ability largely to the purifying and ennobling influence of that mighty spiritual revival which it disparages.

Matthew Arnold's mind was too narrow to take in the magnitude and meaning of that vast Evangelical Movement in England which began with Wesley, affected ultimately the whole Anglican Church, made a better Britain, and largely determined the religious character of the United States. In that epochal movement he saw nothing momentous or enlarging or educative or

refining. Yet three years after Arnold's death the London Spectator, affiliated largely with the Established Church, printed a full-page editorial upon John Wesley and the Wesleyan Church, and ended its eulogy thus: "There is yet another aspect of Wesleyanism which deserves to be noted, and for which it deserves our special respect. The Wesleyans are, and always have been, among the greatest and best of educators, and, what is more, educators of the spirit. . . . Wesley seems, indeed, to have been able to impress upon his often rude and unlettered followers from the very beginning something of his own fine temperament. Wesley, whatever may have been the defects of his natural temperament, was always and at all times a scholar and a gentleman, and the essentials of those characteristics have clung to the body he founded. A temper of sweetness and light, of wideness and yet earnestness, such as must always mark the scholar and the gentleman, belongs to the best Wesleyans, and to the society as a whole. . . . We have great cause to glory in Wesleyan activity and vitality, and be thankful for it. Truly England's debt to Wesleyanism is a great one, not merely spiritually and morally, but even politically—for it was well said that but for John Wesley we should hardly have escaped the contagion of the French Revolution. In the present and in the future as in the past, we may thank God for John Wesley."

In like spirit and to like effect, Professor Goldwin Smith, a scholar of critical and skeptical judgment, yet of historical knowledge, said in one of his latest years: "The religious crusade of John Wesley was among the strongest apologetic and defensive forces, being a practical vindication of Christianity because a demonstration of its power"; and that Wesley's Church had the advantage of being "born, not, like the other Protestant bodies, in doctrinal controversy, but in evangelical reaction against the impiety and vice of the age." He also said that in the nineteenth century, when German philosophy and criticism of the Bible invaded England, and Milman's *History of the Jews* appeared, minimizing miracles and treating Old Testament history and personages in the same spirit as if they were ordinary and merely secular, then the English Evangelicals (chief among whom were the Wesleyans), with "their inward persuasion of conversion and spiritual union with the Saviour" as well as the Quakers with their inner light, were really beyond the reach of the critics, the secularizing historians, and the rationalizing philosophers. The foundations of the evangelical faith, Goldwin Smith clearly perceived, were too deep to be affected by any form of outside skeptical assault; the forces of disintegration could not touch them, never will be able to reach them; they are deeply buried in the soul and rest upon the Rock of Ages. Professor Smith further said that "the

main support of orthodox Protestantism in the United States now is Methodism, which, by the perfection of its organization, combining strong ministerial authority with a democratic participation of all members in the active service of the church, has so far not only held its own, but enlarged its borders and increased its power"; though he forecasts the diminution of its spiritual influence if "the time comes when the fire of enthusiasm grows cold and class-meetings lose their fervor."

Arnold disliked the Puritans as heartily as he disapproved the Wesleyans. In his view Puritanism was the prison in which the spirit of the English people was locked up for two hundred years. But such a spirit toward the Puritans is out of date. It might have fitted the period following the Restoration, when, as Macaulay tells us, the Puritans were so unpopular that the "wits of fine gentlemen," in circles of aristocratic culture, tried out of sheer spite to shock the sensitive Puritan soul by swearing huge bawdy oaths and uttering ribaldry foul enough to shame a scullion or a Billingsgate fishmonger. But surely Arnold's misconception and repugnance are conspicuously out of place in our modern day, when quite another reading of history and a different discrimination of merit are taking the Puritan out of the pillory and giving him credit for his great qualities, including his superb ideality and his heroic purpose to make the will

of God prevail. We have reached the day when theologians like Fairbairn claim that the Puritan "had an imagination capable of turning the highest ideals into the realities of his own life"; when musical critics like Krehbiel credit the Puritan with fine sensibilities and noble tastes; and when the debt of literature to Puritanism is emphasized by so un-Puritanic a journal as the *London Spectator*, which says, "If the essential Puritan spirit, the spirit which exalts the clean, the pure, the upright elements in human nature, were withdrawn from English literature, there would not be very much left worth reading—nothing left which could inspire as well as delight."

It is now being pointed out that Milton's organ music rolled its thunder forth from a soul made solemn and grand by Puritan ideals and principles. And the *Spectator*, referring to the Shakespearean drama, adds that "behind the mask of Shakespeare's imperturbable brow is the same spirit of which Milton himself, the spiritual and ascetic Puritan, is made." When John Ruskin died the same journal argued that he, the greatest modern master of affluent, rhythmic, stately, and illumined prose, was on one side of his nature "hewn out of the granite rock of Puritanism," which accounts for the fact that his first concern was ever with God's kingdom and righteousness, while his conception of that righteous kingdom was wide and ideal, without sor-

didness or narrowness. And in Robert Brown-ing, Professor Dowd sees the perfect exemplification of the spirit of Puritanism in its amplest, richest, and ripest fruitage. Such are some of the valuations which the fair appraisals of to-day put upon the long disparaged Puritans.

Indeed, it might be shown that Arnold himself is, in his strongest qualities, a product of the Puritan spirit which he thinks he abhors. Whence come his own lofty seriousness, his austere devotion to his high ideals, his stringent self-discipline, his study of the habits and requirements of the Power which makes for righteousness, his burden of spirit to rectify with plain words and a fearless, unhesitating hand what he thought wrong—whence is all this derived if not essentially from the high and earnest soul of the Puritan? It may be taken for granted that this æsthetic critic, who so abhorred the Puritans, would not have regarded Jonathan Edwards as an apostle of sweetness and light, nor the great spiritual awakening under him as a manifestation thereof. Yet Edwards, notwithstanding his rather stern theology, had noble and beautiful ideals of human perfection and tried to fill the world with the beauty of holiness, which he described as follows: "Holiness appeared to me to be of a sweet, calm, pleasant, charming, serene nature, which brought an inexpressible purity, brightness, peacefulness, and rapture to the soul; in other words, that it

made the soul like a field or garden of God, with all manner of pleasant fruits and flowers, all delightful and undisturbed, enjoying a sweet calm and the gentle vivifying beams of the sun." The literary style of this extract from Edwards would be sharply rasped down by Arnold's critical file, but for radiant loveliness its description of inward felicity and perfectness is not matched by any achievement or ideal of ancient Hellenism or modern Arnoldian culture.

No review of the range of Arnold's contempt for the want of intelligence and refinement which he alleges to exist among the pious is complete until it recognizes that this disdain extended beyond Dissenters, Evangelicals, and Puritans, even to universal bounds; for he actually proclaims the inferiority of the religious class as a whole, distinctly characterizing "the religious world" as "a second-best public" in comparison with "the aristocratical world," which this rather snobbish aspirant for aristocratic associations assiduously courted.

After all this, Americans can hardly be surprised at finding some of the British censor's disapprovals directed against themselves. Fixing his eye upon the beginnings of our history, he indicates his dislike of the Pilgrim Fathers, and expresses his opinion that if Virgil and Shakespeare had sailed with the party on the Mayflower, those choice spirits would have found the Pilgrims most intolerable company.

This is simply attributing to Shakespeare and Virgil, long dead and quite defenseless against such imposition, his own private sentiments; sentiments which, we fancy, would have been heartily and unanimously reciprocated toward Arnold by the Pilgrim Fathers if that hypercritical and persistent fault-finder had been on board.

Early in his life Matthew Arnold put down with a sharp pen the personal confession that he had little feeling of soul-relationship with the Americans, and his belief that the feeling of kinship with us does not exist at all among the higher classes of England. When from the shores of the old Mother Country, seat of an empire of a thousand years, he sought our "modern coasts whose riper times are yet to be," he found us not to his æsthetic liking—too raw and crude, too rough and recent—and frankly told us so. He noted nothing of spiritual significance in our life, but remarked upon our "radicalness, dissentingness, and general mixture of self-assertion and narrowness," in which we resemble the British middle class, so distressingly offensive to him. Indeed, he regards us as worse than that class, for the civilization of America as a whole is, he says, "distinctly inferior to that of Europe," and our life, as compared with life in England, is "uninteresting, without savor, and without depth." In particular he went from us feeling that "the badness and ignobleness of American

newspapers is beyond belief." In a Chicago newspaper Arnold found the following description of himself: "He has harsh features, supercilious manners, parts his hair down the middle, wears a single eye-glass and ill-fitting clothes." It is said that on returning to his own country he went to see Mrs. Proctor.

"What did the Americans say of you?" asked she.

"They said two things," replied Arnold; "that my clothes did not fit, and that I was conceited."

"Well," said the dear old lady, "I'm sure it wasn't true about your clothes."

Of our Lincoln this "*distinguished*" Briton spoke with something resembling disdain. He saw only the furrowed face, gaunt form, and ill-fitting clothes, and said, "He is not *distinguished*," having previously said of our Washington, "He is not *distinguished* as was Pericles or Cæsar."

We have taken a sweeping survey of the range of Arnold's well-nigh catholic antipathies, and seen how his prejudices bristled like a *cheval-de-frise* between him and large classes of his fellow men—how he regarded as obnoxious or inferior the Americans, the Pilgrim Fathers, the Puritans, all Evangelicals and all Nonconformists; indeed, the entire body of religious people—and, most of all, the British "middle class." We have observed the tartness of his temper, and his ungenerous judgments upon his distinguished

contemporaries. We have examined in him the peculiar type of culture which he advocated, inculcated, and embodied. We trust our analysis of the man, his mission, and his method does not seem unfair, and that no one will say of it, as Gladstone said of Purcell's *Life of Cardinal Manning*, that it "left nothing for the Day of Judgment."

One thing more must be said of Arnold's apostolate. It is not possible for us to leave this subject without noting one fatal omission which mars Arnold's discussion of Ideals of Perfection and dooms his whole scheme for promoting the formation of spirit and character. His famous essay on "Sweetness and Light," which treats of the true ideal of human perfectness, takes texts from Epictetus the Roman stoic and also from Swift, but none from Saint Paul or Saint John; names Virgil and Shakespeare as "souls in whom sweetness and light were eminent"; mentions Abelard in the Middle Ages, and Lessing and Herder in their later time as teachers who aided humanity toward perfection because they "worked powerfully to diffuse sweetness and light"; but nowhere in all the forty-seven pages of that elaborate essay on symmetrical human loveliness does Arnold quote or even name the One supreme embodiment of sweetness and light, the One transcendently potential Person who has done more to illumine and beautify the world, to cleanse impurity, sanify insanity, refine vul-

garity, and soften asperity—to make reason and the will of God prevail—than all the sages of all the ages.

From his very cradle this son of Thomas Arnold was taught to adore the One faultless Character, and to imitate the One perfect Pattern. How could he omit from his study of Perfection the great Teacher and Exemplar who said, “Be ye perfect,” and who held up before men the most sublime ideals ever lifted to inspire the human soul? Was Jesus Christ not worthy to be considered as an authority upon human perfection, or did he not even stand in any way related to the subject in Arnold’s mind?

The real, though unintended, effect of such omissions of Christ’s name is only to make him the more conspicuous. We read that on a certain day in Rome, when twenty illustrious families were represented in a notable procession, the spectators noticed with surprise that two citizens of conspicuous eminence and specially related to that particular occasion, were excluded. The annals of Tacitus tell us that these absent ones were uppermost in every mind and their names were upon all tongues by reason of the public wonder excited by their absence. In like manner is the primacy of Jesus as the supreme authority and exemplar of human perfection accentuated and reproclaimed by Arnold’s strange omission of his name.

To omit mention of Christ was the greater un-

fairness because the light which illumined Arnold's own vision of Perfection really came from Palestine more than from Hellas. That this fledgeling of the Rugby nest should conceive any ideal of human perfection which did not, even if unconsciously to himself, derive its beauty and dignity far more from the Christianity in which he was nursed and immersed than from pagan Greece, whose story he had read in books and the fragments of whose art he had beheld, was practically impossible.

The family coat of arms of Pope Leo XIII (the Pecci family) consists of a strip of green earth on which is a tree and a breadth of blue sky in which is a star. The light of that single star is palpably insufficient to explain the visibility and color of that picture. The bright greenness of earth and tree and even the bright blueness of the sky would not show so by mere starlight. The picture's own brightness compels us to infer an unincluded sun, just out of sight beyond the borders of the picture, from whose shining the strip of earth and sky must receive most of the light which makes them bright and clear. No mere star—not Sirius at his brilliantest nor Jupiter in his utmost splendor—could show such clear outlines and strong colors. Nothing less than sunlight can explain such a vivid picture of earth and sky. In the essay on "Sweetness and Light," Matthew Arnold paints us what may be called the coat of arms of the Family of the Per-

fect, the earth and the sky of it purporting to be lit by one solitary star—the star of Hellenic culture. But that star is not enough to explain his picture's brightness, which simply compels us to suppose the shining on it of a larger luminary than that reburnished Grecian star. And the un-included luminary, which Mr. Arnold omits to mention and fails to frame into his essay, but whose light really lies on his vision of Perfection, is none other than the Sun, the Sun of Righteousness, the Lord our Saviour, blessed and only Potentate, King of kings and Lord of lords, who is the Light of the world and the Sweetness of the earth, "Worthy at all times of worship and wonder," in speaking of whom we borrow for our homage Caponsacchi's joyous words:

"The glory of life, the beauty of the world, the splendor of heaven!

Do I speak ambiguously? The glory, I say, and the beauty,
I say,

And the splendor, still say I."

To guard again against being misunderstood we reiterate at the end what we said at the beginning of this writing, that our sole intention here has been to estimate the value of a particular type of culture and the fitness of its foremost representative to the apostolate he undertook.

It were easy to deliver a eulogy upon Arnold's character and life, his purity of motive, his sincerity and candor, his laborious devotion to

fine ideals. Often our thoughts delight to rest on Arnold at his best, as in these lines about the city missionary, entitled "East London":

"'Twas August and the fierce sun over head
Smote on the squalid streets of Bethnal Green,
And the pale weaver, through his window seen
In Spitalfields, looked thrice dispirited.

"I met a preacher there I knew, and said:
'Ill and o'erworked, how fare you in this scene?'
'Bravely!' said he; 'for I of late have been
Much cheer'd with thoughts of Christ, *the living bread.*'

"O human soul! as long as thou canst so
Set up a mark of everlasting light,
Above the howling senses' ebb and flow,

"To cheer thee, and to right thee if thou roam—
Not with lost toil thou laborest through the night!
Thou mak'st the heaven thou hop'st indeed thy home."

We add the noblest lines of "Rugby Chapel"
addressed to his father's spirit:

"But thou would'st not *alone*
Be saved, my father! *alone*
Conquer and come to thy goal,
Leaving the rest in the wild.

.
If in the paths of the world
Stones might have wounded thy feet,
Toil or dejection have tried
Thy spirit, of that we saw
Nothing—to us thou wast still
Cheerful and helpful and firm!
Therefore to thee it was given
Many to save with thyself;
And, at the end of thy day,
O faithful shepherd! to come
Bringing thy sheep in thy hand."

Matthew Arnold was the noble son of a nobler sire, from whose high faith he fell. His culture was of such a type as brings men toward agnosticism and tinges life and literature with gloom and hopelessness. Early in the son's career his father expressed to Lord Coleridge serious misgivings about the lack of any evangelical spirit in Matthew's writings. How grieved Arnold of Rugby would have been had he lived to hear his son say he was going to observe Christmas Day "because the incarnation was a myth of purity refining to family life." Though doubtless Thomas Arnold would be comforted could he know that his boy, at the end of life and on its very last day, was overheard repeating to himself, while descending the stairs in a friend's house, that fervid, humble, and adoring hymn of the Evangelical Faith, inexpressibly dear to multitudes of the faithful:

"When I survey the wondrous cross
On which the Prince of glory died,
My richest gain I count but loss,
And pour contempt on all my pride.

"Forbid it, Lord, that I should boast,
Save in the death of Christ, my God;
All the vain things that charm me most,
I sacrifice them to his blood.

"See, from his head, his hands, his feet,
Sorrow and love flow mingled down:
Did e'er such love and sorrow meet,
Or thorns compose so rich a crown?

“Were the whole realm of nature mine,
That were a present far too small;
Love so amazing, so divine,
Demands my soul, my life, my all.”

In repeating this hymn Matthew Arnold was approving the faith and the creed of Isaac Watts.

An Oxford scholar and teacher writes that Arnold gave up infidel views toward the end of his life; and Moffat, the famous biblicist, states that Arnold's Testament had such verses as these marked: “Whosoever taketh not up his cross and followeth me, he cannot be my disciple”; “Who-soever would save his life must lose it.”

GLIMPSES OF THE SOUL OF GILDER

WRITE "Richard Watson Gilder" on any page and you turn the rest of that page into the setting for a jewel. To coin the air into the syllables of his name is to transmute oxygen and nitrogen into additional gold currency for the world. Of religious parentage and education, his soul was true till death to the faith of his fathers, and his ancestral church was ever dear to him. Even Professor George E. Woodberry detects and comments on the persistence of the essentially Wesleyan note in his poetry :

"Much of Gilder's verse is exhortatory; there are many hymns and private prayers. It will surprise those who are not familiar with his poetry as a whole to find how preoccupied it is with religious questions. God, Christ, immortality, sin, and sorrow—these are constant in his brooding; and amid the strangely mingled veins there is always something that harks back to the old faith, the childish nurture, the large hope. In some things he was nigh to Wesley, and it shows in the various voices of his verse, in his belief in the beneficence of sorrow, which is most Christian, in his philanthropy, in his humilities, in his fervency. The chrism of his birth is on him, and, however enfranchised, he always speaks as a child of his old church."

To speak of the soul of Gilder is eminently fit and proper, for above all things else he "believed in soul, was very sure of God," made the most of his own soul and of the souls of others. At a gathering of physical scientists, talking with some of them, he said, "I'm interested chiefly in things of the spirit; my study is the soul." "Well," laughed one of them, "you may search me." Gilder's reply to this is in his verses entitled "Souls," published in the *Atlantic Monthly*, voicing his incredulity that high souls perish like beasts of the field or the jungle. It was utterly incredible to him that all the high potencies that throbbed in human souls, and the intensive fires that made them men, not stones nor stars nor trees nor creeping things, and gave identity to every soul, making it individual and alone among myriads, could slip out of being and be lost, eternally extinguished and blotted out. Before he himself went he gave order: "Call me not dead when I have gone into the company of the ever-living."

In most cases ancestry counts for much. When young David went forth against Goliath, King Saul said to Abner, the captain of the host, "Inquire thou whose son the stripling is." Captain Abner failed to ascertain and report; but the king attached so much importance to the matter that when the stripling came back from the fight and stood before the king with the giant's head in his hand, Saul said, "Whose son art thou,

young man?" And David answered, "I am the son of thy servant Jesse, the Bethlehemite." In the royal mind this was of some significance. And whatever the dogmatic or dubitating scientists may teach concerning heredity, the question, "Whose son is he?" is always pertinent and the answer is often enlightening, partly because parentage generally determines early environment, partly also because the propensities and master-passions of the father are as apt to surge in the blood of the son as parental features are to reappear in the face of offspring.

Richard Watson Gilder was the son of the Rev. William H. Gilder, a member of the New York East Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, and was the natural and normal product of a ministerial home. The Christian virtues, integrities, and graces were the guardian angels, intimate comrades of his childhood. His youth grew in knowledge and wisdom under the inspiration and tutelage of ideals high and pure and large—ideals intellectual, ethical, and altruistic. Loudest of all inviting voices and most alluring of all lures in the surroundings of his young life was the call of the True, the Beautiful, and the Good, to whose fine fosterings his soul was so responsive, docile, and dutiful that they gave tone and color to his whole life, their influence becoming more and more overmastering as his years passed into their declining decades.

Not only the quality of Gilder's soul but the

particular bent of his activity was early determined by heredity and environment. Studying and thinking for purposes of effective expression is the constant intellectual occupation of the minister, the chief mental industry that goes on in his home; and the children growing up therein are likely to be influenced toward the study and practice of expression either in oratory, or in literature, or in art. Examples of this are numerous, and a little cluster of three of them happens to lie at this moment directly in our path. In middle New Jersey, within a circle describable by a radius of twenty-five miles, and within the eight years between 1836 and 1844, were born three boys in the homes of as many Methodist ministers. Rev. John Buckley, at Rahway, named his boy James Monroe; Rev. William H. Gilder, at Bordentown, named his Richard Watson; Rev. Benjamin Kelley called his William Valentine. Those three boys came, in the course of time, to occupy for many years editorial chairs within rifle-shot of each other in New York city, the first in the office of *The Christian Advocate*, the second in that of the *Century Magazine*, the third as editor of the *Methodist Review*. The mention of this coincidence will interest parsonages and is sufficiently relevant here to be pardoned by other homes if pardon need be asked. Richard Watson Gilder took to writing very early, carried printer's types in his pocket instead of marbles, and at the age of thirteen was editing and printing with

his own hands a tiny paper. Taking this direction so early, his life, however diverted at times by circumstances, invariably returned to the course into which it finally settled. The number of literary careers dating from ministerial homes is large and not a few of them important; a most notable instance of which is now before the public in the literary prominence of the three sons of Archbishop Benson.

Among Gilder's most amiable and engaging traits were his loving pride in his parentage and his loyalty thereto. Of this a couple of incidents on notable occasions afford a glimpse.

A few years ago the New York Methodist Social Union arranged an evening of ministers' sons; no others spoke; Gilder was one of the speakers. His own Methodist ancestry seemed to him a theme as suitable to that occasion as it was congenial to his own heart; and he talked about it as simply and informally as if at an old-home reunion of relatives and familiars. The subject also chanced to be at that moment uppermost in his mind, for the reason that he had been recently in Philadelphia looking up the records of his grandfather, who was John Gilder, a builder (whose name and occupation, chiming together, were enough to set rhyming a-going in the family). This grandfather built Girard College and with his own hands laid its corner stone, so that the anti-clerical spirit of Stephen Girard, if it saw anything earthly, saw the corner stone of

his college put in place by a Methodist class leader, which must have been almost as grievous to the prejudiced soul of Stephen as if it had been laid by an ordained minister of the gospel. Grandfather Gilder, besides being a religious leader, was an enterprising and progressive civic force, an active and influential member of the City Council. (At this point in the story which Richard Watson Gilder told the Social Union, he paused to interject a wondering query as to how much the Philadelphia City Council is nowadays under the leadership of Methodist class leaders.) The old records of the City Council show that John Gilder was one of the chief advocates for permitting the introduction of illuminating gas into Philadelphia, against the stout opposition of timid unprogressives who argued in agreement with Sir Humphry Davy that so inflammable and explosive a substance would surely blow up the city and destroy a multitude of lives. This grandfather spent his last years in the home of his son, the Rev. William H. Gilder, then principal of Saint Thomas School at Flushing, Long Island, New York, where the boy, Richard Watson, regarded the good old man with veneration, and heard many sacred words and devout expressions fall from his aged lips, especially in the chamber where the godly patriarch breathed his last, and when his reverent mind, wandering on the verge of life eternal, was full of Bible words and prayer meeting and class meeting talk. Gil-

der related how his grandfather, like the father of William Hazlitt, the English essayist, "went on talking of glory, honor, and immortality to the last." When Richard Watson Gilder, speaking at the age of sixty to the New York Social Union at the Savoy, had finished with dear old John Gilder and was about to refer to his own father next in order, his voice was in danger of breaking into a sob, and he was prevented by his emotions from going further on that subject. Then and there we felt the throb of Gilder's soul, filial, tender, loyal, and affectionate.

A similar manifestation was witnessed at Wesleyan University in commencement week, 1903, when the college celebrated the bicentennial of John Wesley's birth. The exercises on Tuesday evening consisted of a masterly portraiture of "Wesley as a Man" by Professor C. T. Winchester, and a poem by Gilder, whose participation in that particular celebration was most fitting because of his Methodist ancestry and his name, Richard Watson; while his presence at Wesleyan University on any occasion was natural enough, because it was his father's college and would have been his own too, had not the Civil War and his father's death deprived him of a college course. With Dr. J. M. Buckley offering the prayer and the writer of this record presiding, this also was to a fourfold extent an evening of ministers' sons. Before the exercises began, Gilder said to the chairman of the evening, "If I break down please

take my manuscript and finish the reading for me"; to which the uncomprehending chairman blindly responded, "There will be no need of that, I am sure," and thereafter sat wondering what the poet's request could have meant. After more than sixty lines in praise of Wesley, Gilder came, in the reading of his poem, to a remembrance of his own father, who was chaplain of the Fortieth New York Regiment and who died of smallpox at Brandy Station, Virginia, in 1864, while ministering to the spiritual and physical needs of his soldiers, suffering with that loathsome disease in the regimental hospital. Gilder's tribute to Wesley closed with this prayer:

"Send us again, O Spirit of all Truth!
High messengers of dauntless faith and power
Like him whose memory this day we praise,
We cherish and we praise with burning hearts.
Let kindle, as before, from his bright torch,
Myriads of messengers aflame with thee
To darkest places bearing light divine!
As did one soul, whom here I fain would sing,
Since here in youth his gentle spirit took
New fire from Wesley's glow."

And then came this filial tribute:

"How oft have I,
A little child, harkened my father's voice
Preaching the Word in country homes remote,
Or wayside schools, where only two or three
Were gathered. Lo, again that voice I hear,
Like Wesley's, raised in those sweet fervent hymns
Made sacred by how many saints of God

Who breathed their souls out on the well-loved tones.
Again I see those eager, circling faces;
I hear once more the solemn-urging words
That tell the things of God in simple phrase;
Again the deep-voiced, reverent prayer ascends,
Bringing to the still summer afternoon
A sense of the eternal. As he preached
He lived; unselfish, famelessly heroic.
For even in mid-career, with life still full,
His was the glorious privilege and choice
Deliberately to give that life away
For country and for comrades; for he knew
No rule but duty, no reward but Christ."

When the poet in his reading reached this tender reference to his father his voice grew tremulous, almost inaudible except to those in the front seats. Emotion came near choking his utterance entirely; the now comprehending chairman leaned forward on the edge of his seat, ready to take the manuscript and obey Gilder's request; but in a few moments the reader controlled the inward tumult, recovered his force of utterance, and proceeded with distinctness. Then and there we felt once more the sensitiveness, the surging affectionateness of Gilder's soul, deep and tidal like the sea. This filial tribute calls to mind, from Jean Ingelow's "Brothers and a Sermon," that good old village pastor, "so anxious not to heaven alone." The spirit and faith of his father fired the soul of Richard Watson Gilder. He too, was, in his way, a preacher and prophet. To one who praised "The Gay Life" he cried warning and alarm:

“‘Gay’!—as the hot crater’s crust all lightning-lit—
But one tread more, and horror of the pit!
‘Gay’? Yes, for a moment, and then weeping sorrow,
With wild remorse to meet the dawning morrow.”

Through his parentage he received by heredity and caught by contagion the passion for saving and serving men, a passion which came from the heart of Christ into the soul of Wesley and made him mighty. J. R. Green, in his *Short History of the English People*, after noticing the effect of the Methodist revival upon religion and morals, goes on to say: “A yet nobler result of the religious revival was the steady attempt, which has never ceased from that day to this, to remedy the guilt, the physical suffering, the social degradation of the profligate and the poor. A passionate impulse of human sympathy with the wronged and afflicted raised hospitals, endowed charities, built churches, sent missionaries to the heathen.” When Gilder was ill in bed for two weeks from sheer exhaustion after the overstrain of his year’s unsparing labor as head of a Commission appointed to investigate the condition of the tenements in the city slums, we told him that what ailed him was that he was his father’s son, troubled with a Christian conscience and burdened with an inescapable sense of responsibility for the welfare of his fellow men and for the saving of the world. This he freely admitted, and said emphatically that the explanation was perfectly true.

It might be interesting to hear the readers of Gilder's poetry guess which of the Nine Muses was the main source of his inspiration and presided over his literary work. About this probably he himself knew best, and we happen to have his own word for it. Once, when we wrote him expressing appreciation of his most recent poem, and our wonder that a man of sixty, carrying so many and varied responsibilities, engaged in so many practical movements, and leading all the time so stirring and strenuous a life, could produce so much good poetry, he wrote in reply: "The good old Methodist Lord, who, I sometimes think, is, after all, my chief Muse, has been very good to me of late." And he went on to say that more poems had come to him in the two preceding years than in any equal period of his life. Addressing a thousand college girls at Wellesley, this man, who was the embodiment of exquisite sensitiveness, critical literary and artistic taste, and refined culture, talked of "the good old-fashioned power of salvation." In temperament, tone, and conviction Gilder was true Wesleyan. Under a gentle manner and soft voice was a white heat of spiritual emotion, a depth of tender sympathy, a copious flow of sweet and noble feeling. The genial sunlit, warm-hearted, and fervent faith which sweetened, brightened, and ennobled the home of his childhood was congenial as well as congenital.

A newspaper man had a glimpse of the soul of

Gilder one evening in one of the thronged streets of the lower East Side. The column-long account in the New York Sun was headed "A Poet in the Slums." It pictured the editor of the Century Magazine mounted on a dray that was standing idle in the street and discoursing earnestly to the motley polyglot crowd that swarms at night in those "smelly" streets. The gaping crowd, halted by the unwonted spectacle, listened wonderingly to this poet trying to impart to them some of his own ideas and ideals for their enlightenment and uplift. From the refined comfort of his home this artist-soul, after a day of toil, had come down into repulsive conditions for the sake of poor, ignorant mortals, impelled thereto by the divine notion, the benign Christian superstition, that he was his brother's keeper, and that the strange, unfortunate folk in the slums were his brothers. The reporter did not concern himself much with the poet's message to the proletariat, but seemed chiefly impressed with the pathetic futility, almost absurdity, of the effort, since what was said must be mostly unintelligible to the tenement-house crowd, toward whom the poet was reaching across a great gulf. Yet the Sun reporter could have nothing but respect and admiration for the high-souled gentleman who was capable of such a mission, and his account closed with a note almost reverential. However futile this sentimental altruistic expedition into Slumdom seemed to the bright young newspaper man, the "Poet in the

Slums" came to be, along with Jacob Riis and Theodore Roosevelt, one of the slum's best friends, a potent practical force for the reform of abuses and relief of miseries for the benefit of the suffering tenement house population in New York. In 1894 exposures of the shameful and cruel conditions of many tenements led to the appointment by Governor Flower of a commission to investigate these conditions and report, the Governor naming Richard Watson Gilder as chairman. It wrought a revolutionary and lasting reform, and is known to this day as the Gilder Commission, because the chairmanship and the chief burden and credit of its work were his.

Some picturesque reporter might have written up "A Poet as Fireman," picturing Gilder in fireman's helmet and water-proof suit, running to fires with the engines, at all hours of the night, till he became almost an idol with the fire department, which had orders to call him for every fire in the tenement region between bedtime and morning, in order that he might study for himself conditions and cause of the all-too-frequent and disastrous fires there. When a visitor from England in 1911, familiar with the slums of English cities, tells us, after going through the slumdom of our American metropolis, that our slums are paradise compared with the dark, gloomy, sour, and sunless courts and alleys known to him in the East End of London, he is unwittingly paying tribute of praise to Richard

Watson Gilder, to whom more than to any other one man the tenement regions owe their light and air and sanitary conditions and children's play grounds. This "Poet in the Slums" was a miracle-working good angel to the friendless and defenseless. His heart "mothered" the children of the slums, and his splendid rage fought fiercely against plutocratic greed and the hinderers of reform even when, and most of all when, the infernal opposition came from that richest of ecclesiastical landlords, the Trinity Corporation. William Winter wrote of George William Curtis: "When he heard the distant sound of the street-organ, his spirit floated away in a dream of the mellow richness of Italy; yet he was a man who could have ridden with Cromwell's troopers at Naseby, and given his life for a cause," which is even truer of Gilder than of Curtis, for Gilder was the more spiritual and selfless and heroic of the two. We cannot help longing for a statue from the hand of his friend, Saint Gaudens, of the slender figure of this "Poet in the Slums" mounted on a dray like a street-preacher, or rushing into a blazing tenement in fireman's uniform. To serve and to save, in a spirit not less than Christlike, was the impulse and the purpose of his life. And all this was largely due to the Christian hands that rocked, and the prayers that diffused their holy fragrance around, his cradle; the atmosphere in which he was born and reared.

Gilder had the soul of a noble citizen. New

York was the city of his heart, and in many a line he sang with enthusiasm of the

“City of glorious days,
Of hope and labor and mirth,
With room and to spare on thy splendid bays
For the ships of all the earth.”

Dear was the murmuring Delaware that afar through his childhood flowed, and dear the four little crystal rivers that gave name to his Tynningham farm amid the green Berkshire hills; but, to the heart of this great citizen, no music was ever “half so sweet as the thunder of Broadway.” “This is the end of the town that I love best,” sang Gilder of Washington Square and its neighborhood when he lived there in a vine-fronted house, in a region having literary associations and a Latin Quarter. There, where Fifth Avenue starts out of the little park on its long and increasingly magnificent northward reach, stands now a great white arch, shaped not very unlike the Arc de Triomphe which crests the Champs Elysée. Reared to commemorate the Father of his Country, it may be regarded as also in some degree a memorial of Gilder, since it was placed there through his initiative, advocacy, and active urgency. That arch of stone is a lasting token both of Gilder’s love for art, which he did much to foster, and of his love for his town, which he did his best to make the City Beautiful and Righteous. To call him a superb and ideal citi-

zen is no exaggeration. Certainly no other man of letters ever resident in New York served the city so unselfishly, variously, valiantly, and memorably; none has left so deep and durable a mark on its face and fortunes; not Washington Irving, nor R. H. Stoddard, nor E. C. Stedman, nor even George William Curtis. Carrying the welfare of the city on his heart, he could not sit with folded hands, merely wishing that ill might cease, but must needs off with his coat for hard work to right whatever was going wrong. And to this end he was "ready to preach, or pray, or fight, or sing a song," whichever would serve the good cause most. When he saw that this huge Town was a place

"Where love of God had turned to lust of gold,
And civic pride in private greed grew cold;
Where foul corruption stained the judge's gown,
And where the base-born broods, like beasts of prey,
Ravaged the treasure-house by night and day,"

then heroic rage flamed in his soul; his gentle fingers clenched into a fist; his song turned into a sword, with which he smote in splendid fury. Once, in the heat of a political struggle, the vulgar and malignant yellow journal which had instigated the murder of the gentle and Christianly McKinley by cartooning him persistently as a hideous and hateful monster, too abominable to live, sneered at Gilder as a mild "imitation of a young girl"; offering thus unconscious homage to

his fineness and spotlessness, and posing his slender, spiritual, patriotic figure in contrast with the thick-necked, heavy-jawed huskies who were bullying and brutalizing and looting the town. He was a sword of the spirit; he was a word of God.

Nothing is more wise for a city than to monument its most worthy and useful sons. A suitable Gilder Memorial should be inevitable. From Columbia University came the proposal of a fund of \$100,000 to endow scholarships in that institution to train men for the "Promotion of Good Citizenship." This, while not unsuitable, seems a somewhat cloistered memorial, removed from public sight, for a career so public and stirring. Nearer the people he served most, and the scenes of his most humane labors, is the suggestion that a bust of Gilder should look down on one of the Children's Playgrounds which he secured. But a monument in some most central and public place would do more for the city's credit and for the instruction and uplift of future generations. As good old Peter Cooper sits forever benignly in bronze in Cooper Square, so a statue of Richard Watson Gilder might well ornament Madison Square; and the fitness of things might be served if it should replace the inartistic and uninspiring effigy now occupying the southeast corner, recalling little more than imperious, strutting, and petulant leadership of a splitting and rancorous faction in one political

party in a period already and desirably well-nigh forgotten—a bronze figure whose conspicuous presence is to the community a mystery and a mortification.

To those who love a man it is not his fame that makes him dear. One friend remembers most in Gilder his smile, his daily living, and his eyes. In days when he misses him most, he wishes the long day through for a sight of Gilder's smile. When he heard poets chanting over Gilder's dust, "his shining deeds, his star-strewn way," what seemed lovelier than all in his recollection was just Gilder's pure and simple living day by day. And this friend's tribute to Gilder closed thus :

"Nor spires nor creeds have ever yet
Fashioned for me a paradise;
But all my unfaith I forget,
Remembering his eyes."

In self-communication, the most wonderful medium of expression is the face. In human nature's canon, the book of Revelation is at the front, not at the back; the face is an apocalypse, revealing the soul and reflecting its visions; the most expressive feature being the eye, the special organ through which the spirit leans out on the window sill and looks at us. At the Gilder Memorial in Mendelssohn Hall, New York city, where that great citizen and statesman Charles E. Hughes spoke, with Hamilton W. Mabie, Jacob Riis, Talcott Williams, and Nicholas Mur-

ray Butler, only once was mention made of Gilder's eye and then in quoted words not overapt, "His mild and magnificent eye." His was not an "eye in a fine frenzy rolling." It was too grave and sober for even the slightest touch of poetic frenzy; though sometimes in the midst of animated practical conversation his eyes went dreamy in an instant, as if they saw past us and beyond to some land that is very far off or had vision of some King in his beauty. The only eyes that Gilder's made us think of were those of Hiram Powers, the American sculptor, as we saw them many years ago in his Florentine studio, while he went about among his works explaining them to us. His Greek Slave was not so fine as the sculptor's eye, almost bovine in size and serenity—large, benign, tranquil, ruminating, full of meditative seriousness and spiritual calm. Charles Reade declared he had never seen such eyes as Hawthorne's, and Bayard Taylor spoke of them as the only eyes he had ever known to really flash fire. An old gypsy woman, meeting young Hawthorne on a woodland path in his student days, gazed with wonder on his handsome face and into his dark blue eyes, and asked, "Are you a man or an angel?" In his poem beginning "Call me not dead," Gilder thinks that, if he should meet Keats wandering in starry places, he would know him by his eyes, though he had never seen Keats. We who have often looked into Gilder's eyes could,

by them alone, easily know him among thousands of thousands in the starry places. And the soul that half revealed and half concealed itself in them was fit comrade for the highest of "the bright intelligences fair in circle round the blessed gates."

A living soul and a quickening spirit, a potent, pervasive, and inciting force was Richard Watson Gilder, always and everywhere the presence of a good diffused.

"He cried 'Nay, nay!' to the worldling's way;
To the heart's clear dream he whispered 'Yea!'"

In Browning's words, he held hard by truth and his great soul; did out his duty; and

"Through such souls alone
God stooping shows sufficient of his light
For men in the dark to rise by."

In his poetry, more than anywhere else, the whole nature of Richard Watson Gilder is made manifest in full expression; making it the voluminous and ample record of his lifetime of thought and feeling. No spirit more sincere, more transparent than his has revealed itself in American literature. Simplicity and sincerity were embodied in him. Through his limpid flowing lines we see the bottom of his soul as clearly as in a crystal brook we see the white sand and clean pebbles through the wimpling water. But no brook-like narrowness limits the flow of his sympathies; over the wide world they go surging like

waves of the sea. One has called him "lord of the realm of sympathy." As to topics and realms, no American poet known to us in the twentieth century has so wide and varied a range, touches and is touched by so many points, notes so many persons and events, turns into poetry so many incidents and occasions of nature and of life, both the trivial and the great. In New York his numerous verses on persons and events in the realms of art, and literature, and civic life, and public service, and private heroism made him the laureate of the city; indeed, so wide beyond his own town did he extend his appreciation that he came near being the Laureate of the Land. He wrote a thousand poems, and in them all not one machine-made uninspired verse. "Will you read a poem for us on such an occasion at such a time and place?" we asked him.

"I cannot promise positively," he replied. "I will if anything comes to me; poetry cannot be made to order, it is born of the spirit."

And that is why Gilder's poetry is the real thing; it is something inspired, and all alive with blood-beat and nerve-thrill. His verse is genuine song, lyric and rhythmic. His balanced clauses are as wings of singing birds that go warbling aloft in free yet ordered flight. Music throbbed through him and through his verse. But no ecstasy carried him away. None of his meters "walked with aimless feet." Always some great aim lifted his lines, like guiding stars above. The

true poet, genuinely touched by the fire divine, takes his mission seriously—does not waste his time blowing soap bubbles; earnestly wants to put some power in words that shall be piercing, bright, miraculous, with light and meaning and beatitude; that shall hearten the humble, energize the listless, revive the fainting, bind up the bruised, hold a lantern to the lost, restore the erring, brand the base, and scourge the false. Gilder, though using no instrument but the pen, was as truly an artist as any man who was in his day handling brush or burin or modeling tools; yet was he a preacher as well. What preacher could do better than he does in his verses, "The Passing of Christ," giving answer to those who imagine that Christ no more survives, suffices, satisfies? Gilder's sanity is as sound as his earnestness is fervent: there is no delirium. James Creelman says, "There are natures so unworldly as to be free from any visible taint of common sense." Pure poet though he was, this was not the case with Gilder, who was as practical as he was poetic and pure. He had both the passion and the power for doing things. In no small degree he was a leader of men and a master of affairs. As up-builder of the great Century Magazine, which he edited for twenty-five years, and as an active and efficient force in civic reform, in the fight for righteousness, in humane measures of relief, he demonstrated beyond possibility of dispute his

sound sense, practical wisdom, and sagacity. A very gentle nature, but a resolute spirit was Gilder's. It is the mistake of the violent and the vicious to underestimate the pervading, far-carrying, and lasting might of gentleness. Concerning it the ignorant deceive themselves. Take for teacher the most recent science. Says the *Electrical Review*, on the mild and minute electric current required by the telephone: "The peculiar electric telephone current is perhaps the quickest, feeblest, and most elusive force in the world. It is so amazing a thing that any description of it seems irrational. It is as gentle as the touch of a baby sunbeam and as swift as the lightning flash. It is so small that the electric current of a single incandescent lamp is greater—500,000,000 times. Cool a spoonful of hot water just one degree, and the energy set free by the cooling will operate a telephone for ten thousand years. Catch the falling tear-drop of a child and there will be sufficient waterpower to carry a spoken message from one city to another." Beware of the gentle, modest, mild-mannered, quiet-spoken man; for his manner is an understatement; his unadvertised overplus may give you a drink of "the wine of astonishment." He employs no trumpeter, begins not blusteringly. You are in danger of accounting his unmenacing front as evidence of feebleness. But beware of the last half of the game. When he brings up his reserves the battle is likely to go against you, whoever

you are. Chinese Gordon was such an one, the famous type of a dynamic though quiet class of men who, fearing God, fear nothing else. "Valiant Ruskin!" once cried Thomas Carlyle in irrepressible admiration of his friend. Let us cry, "Valiant Gilder!" inasmuch as from the time when, a slender stripling, he marched under the flag with Landis' Philadelphia Battery to fight for liberty and union in the sixties, all down through forty years to the last fight for decent politics and honest city government, his was a valiant life. Helen Gray Cone dedicates her volume of verse entitled *Soldiers of the Light* to Gilder, because, she says, "He served all his years a Soldier of the Light." He tempered his blade in altar-fire, and marched with the angels against the demons. His was a blithe and sweet, but grave, serious, and reverent Muse, all in earnest, not one flippant word or frivolous line. One critic says that, in his verses on public themes, issues, and concerns, he attained a gravity and dignity unique in American letters. Dignity clothes also his love songs, which are simple and sweet, tender and pure and fine. His manhood is incapable of the coarseness which is scorned of all manly men. A nature too spiritual for carnal lapses, too fine for any touch of grossness. He is a clean visitor whose sandals have not slipped in sensual mire, a decent guest who comes in upon our carpets without soiling them and leans his hands upon our door

posts without smearing them. He had no tolerance for "the prurient throng who soil with foul, empoisoned breath the sanctity of song." To one such (name mercifully omitted) he cried:

"If you wish, go be a pig,
In and out of season;
But do not bore us with a big
Philosophic reason";

and don't make excuse for what is inexcusable. Gilder was helpful to the younger brood of singers by both praise and admonition. He admired and encouraged that bright spirit, Frederic Lawrence Knowles, and paternally chastised that defiant cub, George Viereck, for his eroticism (accent on the "rot"), whom he had in mind when he wrote to a settlement worker in 1906:

"It is hard for me to understand a nature craven enough to be willing to put up in this life with anything but the best, the most noble, the absolutely perfect, the spiritually highest. A person who says, 'I am content with the shadows of things, the shams, the less fine, the impure,' is like one who should say, 'I do not like clean bread and meat; give me swill.'

"Every man is inescapably the guardian of his soul. That is his first duty in the world, to keep that soul of his clean. If he betrays his trust, he is not only a cowardly deserter, but he cannot escape by this default from injuring other souls, either through occasioning grief or by contamination.

"Aside from these ethics there is such a thing as moral taste. A man should be ten thousand times more ashamed of betraying bad moral taste than of showing bad taste in the æsthetic field. If a man blushes at being caught in some banal opinion about art, how scarlet he should turn at any suspicion of having a false opinion as to morals—Tennyson's line: Self-reverence, self-knowledge, and self-control. Anyone who calmly cuts himself off from these is a moral leper distributing evils so far as he touches other souls and this continually, with effects eternal."

The high and white morality of such a life as Gilder's lifts above the human stream, for men to gaze upon, a front as chaste, marmoreal and majestic as the Madeleine above the thronged boulevard of Paris; and we can hear within each the sound of psalm and prayer and anthem. One noteworthy thing is that Gilder is supremely religious. A letter from John A. Story comes to memory: "I cannot put into word just what Gilder's poems are to me. I would say 'delicious' if the word were not so sensuous and his work so spiritual. He says something for Christ that I do not find said with the same buoyant tone in any other American poet. (I am not ashamed to say that I love him too for his rime. Gilder's rime is a flower appearing in spiral round the stem from which it naturally grows, and he certainly uses it for what Mr. Hutton calls its legitimate function, 'the delicate and definite

clasping of thought to thought.')

Gilder's *Complete Poems* is the most positively, saturatedly, and devoutly Christian volume of poetry known to us in its decade. While not quite so singular and individual as Lanier, the two spirits are in close kinship, though Gilder is the more deeply, intelligently, and expressively Christian, just as his realm is wider, his knowledge more extensive, his citizenship larger, his industry more fruitful, his contact with the world of men and affairs more vital and intimate—all this making him a far mightier power for good; indeed, nothing less than a great moral force, a noble, delightful, admirable citizen. He knew that the pure in heart see the great realities and have all the real joy of life, and he cried:

"Keep pure thy soul!
Then shalt thou take the whole
Of delight;
Then, without a pang,
Thine shall be all of beauty whereof the poet sang—
The perfume and the pageant, the melody, the mirth
Of the golden day and the starry night;
Of heaven and of earth.
O, keep pure thy soul!"

He knew the value of his father's faith, and cried:

"Despise not thou thy father's ancient creed;
Of his pure life it was the golden thread
Whereon bright days were gathered, bead by bead,
Till death laid low that dear and reverend head.

From olden faith how many a glorious deed
Hath lit the world! Its blood-stained banner led
The martyrs heavenward; yea, it was the seed
Of knowledge, whence our modern freedom spread.
Not often has man's *credo* proved a snare—
But a deliverance, a sign, a flame
To purify the dense and pestilent air,
Writing on pitiless heavens one pitying Name;
And 'neath the shadow of the dread eclipse
It shines on dying eyes and pallid lips."

Gilder had the wisdom not to despise his father's ancient creed, and could consistently exhort. The poem which oftenest repeats itself to us of all that Gilder wrote is, "The Song of a Heathen" supposed to be sojourning in Galilee when Jesus was teaching there (32 A. D.), who has heard many and contradictory things about the wonderful young teacher, and perhaps has been in the crowds or casual companies that listened to him; and who, having pondered much upon the question who and what Jesus is, arrives at this sane and sensible conclusion:

"If Jesus Christ is a man—
And only a man—I say
That of all mankind I cleave to him,
And to him will I cleave away.

"If Jesus Christ is a God—
And the only God—I swear
I will follow Him through Heaven and Hell,
The earth, the sea, and the air!"

And really, on any theory about Jesus Christ,
that is the only admissible and consistent thing

for any decent and sensible person to do—follow him and cleave to him. The most convincing of arguments is not an argument but a feeling—feeling *our need of Christ*. So Gilder, in a moment of mental perplexity, writes :

“Thou Christ, my soul is hurt and bruised!
With words the scholars wear me out;
My brain o’erwearied and confused,
Thee, and myself, and all I doubt.

“And must I back to darkness go
Because I cannot say their creed?
I know not what I think; I know
Only that *Thou art what I need.*”

His poetry sums up his life, and is a treasury of beauty and of melody. Lines which Gilder wrote in memory of another equally befit his going :

“When fell, to-day, the word that he had gone;
Not this my thought: Here a bright journey ends,
Here rests a soul unresting; here at last,
Here ends that earnest strength, that generous life—
For all his life was giving. Rather this
I said (after the first swift, sorrowing pang):
Radiant with love, and love’s unending power,
Hence, on a new quest, starts an eager spirit—
No dread, no doubt, unhesitating forth
With asking eyes, pure as the bodiless souls
Whom poets vision near the central throne
Angelically ministrant to man,
So fares he forth with smiling Godward face;
Nor should we grieve, but give eternal thanks—
Save that we mortal are and needs must mourn.”

THE WOODS AND THE INN

THE woods in this case is the "Jersey Pines"; the inn, the "Pine Tree" at Lakehurst; but the woods and the inn, as used in this writing, are typical. This is not an advertisement of "the Pines" or of anything else—any more than it is a syllogism or a symphony, a table of logarithms or a conundrum; it is simply a discursive meditation, an impromptu, inspired by the woods and the inn.

"The Pines" is a vast tract of coniferous country in southern New Jersey, extending from the Atlantic Ocean to Delaware Bay, containing some hundreds of thousands of acres of pine mixed with oak, concerning which the State Geological Reports says: "The soil is dry, sandy, and absorbent, which, together with the aromatic breath of the pines, makes the region remarkably healthful." In the heart of that region this meditation was jotted down.

"This is the forest primeval"; for not since the region rose out of the sea and vegetation first grew has this tract been other than a wilderness, and so far are modern forestry and silviculture from touching it that one doubts if even Mr. Pinchot has ever heard of it. This might pass as that "vast wilderness," that "boundless con-

tiguity of shade" for which the poet yearned; for its extent is such that the most ambitious pedestrian can walk as many miles in one direction as he cares to day after day without getting out of the wilderness region, but not enough to satisfy a certain public librarian, a slight little woman with gray hair, keen eyes, and a quick step, who said, "My idea of heaven is a forest where I can walk a thousand years, with a botany under one arm and a Dante under the other, and only people of my own choosing for company."

The manifold variety and charm of winter woods are unsuspected by those who do not visit them, and who probably imagine them to be a withered, dreary, uninviting waste; whereas their chaste and austere beauty is full of fascination and refreshment for those who yield to their appeal. Enough there is, even in winter, to make strong the lure of wagon roads and footpaths through the woods. Nothing less than a bit of nature's elegance is one of these tempting woodland paths, paved with clean, white sand which was once sea-bottom; paths silkily carpeted with pine-needles; paths margined with tufted and quilted mosses, mottled in grays and greens and darker hues, daintily embroidered and filigreed with delicate vines; paths hedged by wild shrubbery and thickets and the limitless arabesquery of the untamed wilderness.

These winter paths offer inducements quite as enriching, if not as numerous, as those of bar-

gain counters in department stores. As health resorts they outrank stores, courtrooms and offices, parlors and lecture rooms, libraries and laboratories. Along their well ventilated aisles whoever goes out to "eat the air," as natives of India phrase it, finds that it tastes good: it has what Cable calls "the sweet, dry smell of salubrity"; and in these woods electricity and oxygen generate ozone—a tonic which tastes better than alcoholic and narcotic nostrums, and which "addeth no sorrow therewith."

Added to the hope of physical renovation to be found upon these paths, a promise of mental invigoration is definitely held out. A man who, by dint of sedulous industry, had acquired some of the brain-fag which caused Thackeray to write, "I have taken too many crops off the soil," chanced to read in a book on *The Religion of Nature* about "the mental strength that comes to those who make a comrade of Nature"; and at once he was moved by a feeling of personal destitution to go several miles into the woods to get some mental strength by coaxing Nature to be his comrade for a while. He got at least benefit enough to make him want to go again.

Only infants, valetudinarians, the aged, the "powerful weak," the indolent, the preoccupied, and a few others are insensible to the enticements of woodland paths. A noble, wholesome, and inspiring sight it was to see in rapid motion through the Lakehurst woods one glittering

white day the tall, slender, erect figure of a youthful superoctogenarian judge, swinging his long limbs in a loping stride, mile after mile, in the bracing winter air, pushing his fine, keen face against the north wind, his cheeks touched with the ruddy glow of outdoor exercise—a spectacle well calculated by contrast to console one for having had to behold on city promenades some very different pedestrian feats, such, for example, as the saunter of the fatted prodigal, or prodigal calf, who totes his precious body along the pavement for the solemn and sublime purpose of giving his walking-stick an airing; or the perilous navigating of the billowy sidewalk by a gifted lawyer, coming down the street with his sea legs on, lurching alternately to larboard and starboard, with feet widespread, trying hard to prevent the tumultuous sidewalk from coming on board over his bow or his quarter, making one think of Robert Hall's vision of Satan, "The pavement heaved under him like the billows of the sea and he looked like majesty in ruins—majesty in ruins"; or the zigzagging of the doggy woman who makes a "bloomin' show" of herself as she plays the part of Lady in Waiting to his imperial dogship, attending him from station to station of his all too public pilgrimage along the avenue. A Washington Chief Justice remarked to his friend as they were passing such a sight, "When I see that, I always feel sorry for the dog that has to keep such company." By contrast,

the sight of a venerated nonogenarian judge—the embodiment of sense, dignity, and soundness of body, mind, and soul—vigorously afoot along the winter woodland roads, is an exhilarating and inspiring spectacle.

The winter wind is searching and antiseptic. It blows cobwebs from the brain and microbes from the garments. It goes through one's clothes like a customs inspector, and causes one man to remember a day when he went to a tenement house on call to baptize a dying babe in a room containing three other sick children. Asking the father, who held one child in his arms, what ailed them all, he received the grinning, lightheaded, if not really delirious reply, "Diptheery, worst kind." The man having decorously fulfilled his ministry in that pest-hole, shook his garments for a mile or two in the blustering winter wind to get surely rid of the *bacilli diphtheriæ* before he dared take himself to his own or any home.

Only to the observant and attentive does Nature show her winter beauties, less obvious and obtrusive than those of summer. In most of us powers of observation lie inert or disused. Much pleasure is missed by failing to notice and attend. A middle-aged woman tells how, long ago, Harry Fenn, the artist, took a child sleigh-riding among the North Jersey hills and stopped to show her the wonder of the grasses, pointing out each little brown spear and seed cup which rose above

the snow crust, and what a fine setting they made for the ice jewels, and what lovely blue shadow patterns they drew on the snow, and made the child notice how graceful and individual the naked trees were, each keeping its distinct character and its personal dignity, though stripped of the glory of its foliage by the frosty adversities of winter; and showed her that the clean, delicate gray beauty of the naked trees is as affecting as the tender charm of their budding in spring or the flutter of their leafage in summer. The artist gave the child a lesson in the exquisite and minute beauty of this amazing world; and when the spirited pony hurried them home through the December twilight, shaking his shaggy mane and jingling the sleigh bells merrily, the happy little girl felt that she had been to Wonderland. Across forty years the woman still sees those trees and grasses, and to that ride chiefly she attributes her interest ever since in winter landscapes. Of such a landscape it is as warrantable to say as of a popular grand opera in the words of a London paper, "It leaves the impression of true and treasurable beauty."

In the rush of busy life an active man pays small attention to the beauties and transactions of earth and sky; seldom sees anything but his immediate objective from hour to hour. But when he drops out of the rush into some country region, especially if it be a region of hills and woods and streams, for a few days of change and

rest or secluded work, he must be pretty dull or weary or aged if there does not start up afresh in him the old boyish interest in the outdoor world. And this sudden and eager interest is attended often by a curious sense of partnership in Nature's ongoings. He even inclines to take charge of some of its processes, sharing the feeling George Meredith had when he wrote one January from his chalet in the Surrey country: "I am every morning on the top of Box Hill. I drop down the moon on one side, I draw up the sun on t'other. I breathe fine air, I shout ha! ha! to the gates of the world." After a long early-to-bed sleep, it may easily happen that he feels called to assist at the sunrise, to extend a helping hand to the inexperienced and bashful new day, which never saw this world before, as it climbs timidly up over the stile of the morning from the subhorizon underworld; ten hours later he thinks it important that he go out and help the Evening Angels, brightly robed as Fra Angelico's, put the tired sun to bed in the gorgeous dormitory of the west, beyond where the serried cedars, palisading the skyline, screen his Majesty's retirement; and sometimes the man lingers till the dusk deepens into dark to make sure before he goes indoors for the night that the evening star hangs its lantern in the right place and lights up at the proper moment. Here in the Jersey Pines he appoints himself Keeper of the Forests and Inspector of Roads, Bridges, and

Waterways. Several times between sunup and sundown he is liable to think he must go out and superintend the woods; must see that none of the pure-hearted, guileless little streams loses its way in its gentle journey to the lake; wants to lean over the railing of Black's Bridge and look down into the little river that comes gliding through the swamp and slides under the bridge, swaying in its clean, soft-flowing water, the wavy grasses dark and bright, and the trailing mosses and various long-haired water-plants, like a moving multicolored tapestry, playing loose over its gravelly and sandy bottom. As if he were afraid lest some of the wood paths may not find their way to the Inn, but wander about all night, like lost Babes in the Woods, he goes out before night-fall to show them the way home. Altogether, he may lead quite a busy life supervising the woods and looking after Nature's affairs in general.

Doubly dear and precious is every green thing in the depth of winter, and in these winter woods, when the ground is not snow-covered, one is as much delighted as surprised at the amount of evergreenness, not only in the pines overhead, but also in the ground growth of thickets, shrubs, vines, mosses, and even grasses, continuing in spite of biting frosts a summer-in-winter on the bosom of the earth as if the forest were a sheltering conservatory. It is a brave little spectacle to see how successfully the wintergreen lives up

to its name, by the mile, along Checkerberry Road, alike under the snow as under the sun, the long winter through. Jeweled with consistency would our records as Christians be if we but lived up perennially to the sacred and inspiring Name we bear as loyally and completely as this pleasant little oval-leaved, white-blossomed, red-berried plant fulfills in its lowly life the expectation raised by its name.

In open places in the heart of the woods in very sunny spots of sand are clumps of the opal cactus. It has invisible spines, sharp enough to pierce the skin, and stay there till they fester out. I ascertained this without the aid of a book. The cactus is an academic plant, second cousin to the thistle, with a Latin motto, *Nemo me impune lacessit*, same as Scotland's.

Nothing is more wonderful in winter woods than the exquisite patterns and rich variety of kind and form and color in the family of mosses. One may find here, as easily as "half-way up an Alpine gorge, the fairy-cupped, elf-needed mat of moss." Chief among such displays are the peculiar small rounded or obloid mats or low mounds of moss found in boggy places, like embossed shields or embroidered cushions, from five to thirty inches in diameter, hassocking the spongy ground, and so Orientally rich in polychromatic beauty that they seem as if painted with ecru and burnt umber, stained with saffron and cedar wood, encrusted with topaz and gar-

net, or carved from quarries of feldspar and albite and beryl. One man, amazed at such beauty in so rough a place, felt a momentary impulse to use one of these hassocks of moss for a kneeling cushion, to turn the marsh into an oratory, in mute adoration of the Divine Designer and Decorator whose lavish and matchless artistry does not disdain to adorn the lowliest spots in the forest's remotest recesses with embellishments fit for the palaces of kings.

When the earth is snow-covered, the color scheme of this pine-oak wilderness is a symphony of white and green and brown; but when snow and ice are off, as is mostly the case, the variety of colors is larger, including many mottled mats and patches of multicolored moss; including, too, the bright crimson of the cranberries floating on the flooded bogs or drifting down the outlet streams; including also the dark purple of the oddest bit of vegetation in all the Jersey Pines—the Pitcher Plant, called also Huntsman's Cup, the *Sarracenia Purpurea* of the North, a most singular plant found at the edge of streams or lakes, or in boggy acres, and sometimes encamped in clusters on one of the low mounds or mats of variegated moss just described. This queer little creature carries a water-pitcher and in the proper season holds over itself, alike in shade and shine, a tall dark purple flower, like a parasol. It has these curious human pitcher-and-parasol ways because it is a distant relative of

ours, belonging as it does to the order of carnivora; for it is insectivorous, catching, drowning, devouring, and digesting insects. Thus in its little wilderness this rudimentary swart Israelite of the marsh has its winged flesh-food and its drink as surely, and from the same Hand, as ancient Israel in its vast wilderness had quails from heaven and water from the Rent-Rock Spring.

In this witched and witching world nobody has quite so wonderful a time of it as the poet with his miraculous faculty for seeing visions and dreaming dreams. The poet is a man so daft that he fancies he hears what he doesn't hear and thinks he sees what he doesn't see. In this the poet is a great child, as also the average child is something of a poet. Democritus barred poets from the slopes of Helicon as being probably mad; and Edison would not include them in his Hall of Fame. Scientific gentlemen are apt to distrust and decry the poets as visionaries who contribute nothing to the mechanics of life—though, we respectfully suggest, it would be difficult for the scientists to prove that the poets do not furnish life with *motive power* of a mysteriously if not miraculously mighty sort; and the sort of motive power that energizes and moves a *man* must be reckoned superior in usefulness to the sort of motive power which merely moves engines and *machinery* made by the man. However hampered and oppressed or depressed a poet may

feel amid the bustle and roar of city streets, when he takes to the woods he carries his temperament and imagination with him and lets them loose to revel *ad libitum*.

One thing which impresses everybody in deep woods on windless days is that utter stillness which made a little boy lift his finger and say in a half whisper, "Hush, mother; listen to the silence." The poet finds this intense stillness sensitive and the silence almost vocal. To the prosaic mind Nature seems more incommunicative than did an overworked, broken down teacher pacing her room in the insane asylum, day after day, with arms behind her, in rigid reticence, refusing for long periods to utter a single word. When a friendly visitor asked gently and appealingly, "Why won't you talk?" she answered, "Because I have nothing to say." The visitor's laughing reply, "Well, if the rest of us waited till we really had something to say, probably we would keep still too," brought to the pale, refined face a faint smile—the first in many months. Nature too is a silent teacher. Loquacity is not one of her foibles. Her reticence seems to the natural man invariable. To most of us she never makes any definite or recordable remarks. A stenographer, sitting down in the woods to interview Nature, would turn into stone and be buried under the deposits of ages, and be dug up as a geologic fossil, before he would get one authentic sentence on his writing pad from

Nature's lips. The look on her face is as inscrutable as the sphinx's stony stare or Mona Lisa's smile. Yet the poet and the mystic insist that her look is not meaningless; that she has something on her mind which she wants us to read. A keen and brilliant book, now lying open before us, says that the work of philosophy is to enforce the attitude of meditation, and that we do not really experience any object until, like the poet, we fade away with it into the silent forest, far from the strife of tongues; and the book emphasizes the value of the state of mind which prefers to attend rather than to speak, and which listens with great and ever-changing emotions to the deep voice of the world. Nature, according to the ancient Plotinus, is saying to us in her wordless way, "Understand in silence, even as I am silent"; and a modern Plotinus told us only yesterday that "Ultimate truth is got only in the absence of words"—from which a relentlessly logical mind might infer that in the stillness of woodland paths we may be on the track of ultimate truth. Notice that both of these Plotinuses treat us as mystics; and mystics, confessed or unconfessed, we verily are. We all have the mystic ichor in our blood, and were conscious of having a super sense exceeding our five physical senses before Bishop Brent wrote his book on *The Sixth Sense*. Why not a sixth sense for us as credibly as a fourth dimension for space? Mathematics sometimes assumes five, six, or more di-

mensions; and is mere space more affluent, voluminous, and extensive than a living expansive man? And if the sixth sense is strong and alert enough, one may share in the woods that mystical expectancy which quivers in the soul of the poet, nestling close to Nature's heart and waiting for her to make a confidant of him:

"The silence grows
To that degree, you half believe
It must get rid of what it knows;
Its bosom does so heave."

To a poet with his sixth and seventh senses at their keenest

"The Silence sings
Like a vast rumor of unheard-of things."

Even William Winter, in his poem "The Voice of the Silence," intimates that the tranquillity of Nature in peaceful silent places breathes admonitions, and that there is some subtle spiritual import in, and impartment from, the quiescence of the physical world.

Sometimes the silence of the forest's deep recesses casts over us the solemn mood which inspired George Meredith's magical "Dirge in Woods":

"A wind sways the pines
And below
Not a breath of wild air;
Still as the mosses that glow
On the flooring and over the lines
Of the roots here and there.

The pine tree drops its dead;
They are quiet as under the sea.
Over head, overhead
Rushes life in a race,
As the clouds the clouds chase;
And we go,
And we drop like the fruits of the tree,
Even we,
Even so."

In the heart of the Jersey Pines the sense of utter solitude matches the utter silence of the stillest days. The comparative absence of life surprises one: seldom sight of hunter or sound of gun or baying hound; or sight of rabbit or rabbit-tracks; or sight or sound of any bird; no whirr of wings nor drumming partridge: now and then quail or crows on the ground or in the trees or in the sky; but often the only living sound is the wee little, sweet little "weet, weet, weet" of a wee little bunch of feathers flitting about in the branchy thickets. A man who transfers himself from the hurly-burly of strenuous, struggling, strident life into the forest, easily understands what Janus of Basel meant by "the woodland peace." The more complete the solitude the better; he finds it so poulticing and comforting, after the bruising rush and crush of crowds, that he pictures how lovely it would be to build a cozy bungalow far away in the woods and fondly name it "Lonesomehurst" in testimony to the sweetness of solitude, which, however, is said by some amiable and experienced

persons to be sweeter if you have some one to share it who agrees that it is sweet.

"What place is that?" asked a passenger on a Potomac River steamboat of one of the boat-hands. "That's A ——a, the deadest and God-forsakenest place in America." But, strange as it may seem, no one ever feels the woods to be a dead and God-forsaken place. The solitude seems mysteriously, but stirringly, alive with something going on. Perhaps Professor Gummere could detect the goings on of a communal life among the trees of the forest. Who has not heard the leaves whispering together, some of them making a noise like excited little gossips telling the neighborhood scandal to every passing breeze, while the dry oak-leaves have rattling altercations with rougher winds that go blustering by. Even the uninitiated suspect that Nature is conducting secret Masonic rites in Forest Lodge, or feel themselves to be assisting in some sacred ritual of silence. A dim sense of invisible presences is among primitive instincts and intuitions which have worked fruitfully in human history, as when elaborate ancient polytheistic mythologies populated the woods with dryads, fauns, and nymphs. Even in this arc-lighted age an unimaginative and properly skeptical twentieth-century man, duly puffed up with his consciousness of modernity, when he turns a corner on the woodland path and comes upon a mossy, viny, ferny, nooky spot just fit for elves and fairies,

becomes a melting mystic and instinctively feels that the most natural way of explaining their absence is by the theory that his approaching footsteps startled their tiny shynesses, so that he barely missed a fluttering which he might have heard and a scurrying which he failed to see. He reckons this as one of the near-happenings, the almost-not-quotes of life, with which our actual experience is forever bordered. And why are not the soft cushions of pixy moss in that secluded nook proof positive that the pixies resort there, as surely as an empty bird's nest implies the bird or a vacant cradle the babe? And why is that green velvet rug in the middle of the nook, if not for fairies to frolic on?

But our subtle human intuitions go beyond fanciful suspecting of invisible wild woodland creatures, and the duly reverent, serious soul of man soberly surmises some superhuman presence, even the presence of Him who filleth all in all. The old Greek wondered if under majestic trees he might not overhear the councils of the gods and gain oracular wisdom by listening for the voice of Zeus in the rustle of Dodonian oaks. But the great god Pan is dead and the oracles of the groves are no longer pagan. Jonathan Edwards said: "The beauties of Nature are really emanations or shadows of the excellency of the face of God"—the Christian God. That great nature-lover and man-lover Charles Kingsley said that wherever he had a sense of mystery

surrounding him in Nature he felt a gush of enthusiasm toward God—the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, Father of mercies and God of all comfort. To the devout Lanier there came, in the woods, his vivid *Ballad of Trees and the Master*. Since the Divine Man went in and out of groves and prayed all night in them, and in under their branches had his agony and bloody sweat, the forest is not pagan any more. One man, wandering in the winter woods and looking afar between the tree-trunks across stretches of spotless snow, recalled the experience Browning narrates, when leaving the little Roman chapel on Christmas Eve, the man suddenly saw, “on the narrow pathway just before,” the Divine Master—“He himself with his human air; saw the back of him—no more; no face: only the sight of a sweepy garment, vast and white, with a hem that could be recognized.” And the man’s pulses leaped for joy because on the common street he had caught sight of Christ’s vesture’s hem—with no more cause, mark you, for thinking of Christ on a street in Rome than you and I have when we see through the dark pines the wide spread of snow like “a sweepy garment vast and white” with a hem that your soul and mine touch and get virtue out of Him and healing from the seamless dress. The very least that any woodland visitor, who ever thinks of Christ at all, can do is to say to his soul on entering, “Into the woods my Master went,” and on emerg-

ing, "Out of the woods my Master came." Nature points to some One greater, seeming to say: "Lo, there cometh One the latchet of whose shoes I am not worthy to unloose."

All forest roads should lead to some place of shelter and rest. Some that run through the Jersey wilderness find their way to Lakehurst and the Pine Tree Inn at the edge of the little village. The pines bring their ranks up to its west end and stand looking in at its dining-room windows; and most of the woodland paths lead to its friendly front door, which says:

"Now lift my latch and readily I swing
To bid thee come where courtesy is king."

The atmosphere of Mother Mary Baker Glover Eddy's meditation halls is not serener or sunnier than the interior of this Inn, nor a cultivated home more refined and gracious. The words of one guest express the feeling of all, "The whole place spells R-e-s-t." The pine-cones pictured on the cover of its booklet are emblematically suitable to the Inn, both outdoors and indoors; for outside the trees are loaded with the cones and inside a Pine Knot is not unfit motto-emblem for the Pine Not, Don't Worry Club which the guests virtually constitute, since the lines are fallen unto them in pleasant places. Here Mine Host thinks an altar more respectable than a barroom, and so substitutes the better for the worse. Over the round-arched fire-place

in the Inn's central hall, on the chimney-piece, are lettered the words of an old hymn: "Around our habitation be Thou a wall of light." That inscription is enough to insure that one will not meet here the flashy, the trashy, or the unrefined. In a world like this such a house is a splendid moral venture, and its prosperity demonstrates in public sight, like a geometric proposition on the blackboard, that Wisdom can take care of her children and that the Power that makes for Righteousness is able to fulfill the promise given to godliness for both worlds.

The inn is one of the most venerable of human institutions. Away back in Genesis, in the morning of history, Joseph's brethren stopped at an inn and fed their asses when they were down in Egypt buying corn. And the man who fell among thieves, and was stripped and beaten and robbed and left half dead, had reason to be glad that there was an inn on the old Jericho road to which the good Samaritan could take him for shelter and care.

An inn is a sign of civilization, serving a general need, and, first or last, having a place in almost everybody's experience. It is the traveler's refuge; it stands by the side of the road, for the needs of the physical man, for temporary rest and shelter, with food and drink. It has been suggested that the quality of any country's inns is a fair indication of its advancement in civilization. Boswell tells us how Dr. Sam John-

son, stopping at a comfortable inn, spoke of it as a token and measure of national civilization, and expatiated on the felicity of England in having such excellent houses for travelers, exulting over Britain's superiority above the French in this respect. And then went on: "There is no private house in which guests can enjoy themselves so freely as in a capital inn. Though there be ever so great plenty of good things, ever so much grandeur and elegance, ever so much desire to make the guest feel easy; in the very nature of the case it cannot be: there must always be for both host and guest some degree of anxiety and constraint. The guest feels bound to make his best effort to be agreeable; and no man, unless he be a very impudent dog, can attempt to command what is in another man's house as freely as if it were his own. Whereas, at an inn there is general freedom from anxiety and constraint. The guest is sure he is wanted, and the more trouble he gives, the more good things he calls for, the welcomer he is." And then (says Boswell) the gruff old Samuel repeated with emotion Shenstone's lines:

"Whoe'er has traveled life's dull road,
Where'er his stages may have been,
Can testify he oft has found
His warmest welcome at an inn."

He knows the welcome there is genuine and cordial, every look and motion of Boniface saying

sincerely, "All that I have is thine" ("for a reasonable price, of course," tacitly understood). That many should prefer to be at an inn, where they are wanted, rather than in some home where they are not sure of being wanted, is not surprising, but looks like a fine blending of good sense and self-respect.

The inn has been used by some as a quiet retreat for uninterrupted writing or study, an escape from rush and roar and jostle in a peaceful seclusion where one feels no more the stir of the great Babel nor even hears afar its noise. Professor C. T. Winchester tells us how William Hazlitt, the delightful English essayist, when vexed by society or craving solitude for work, used to flee for refuge to a lonely wayside inn on the edge of the heath a mile out from the village of Winterslow, near Salisbury, and that his best writing was done there.

Inns have a notable place in literature and in recorded history as in life: Fielding and Smollett and Sterne, Cervantes and Walter Scott and Le Sage, Thackeray's "Roundabout Papers," and Dickens' stories—all full of talk about inns; and many famous hostelries are told about, quaint or ancient, or noted as resorts and rendezvous of numerous celebrities, boon companions and congenial spirits. England and English literature are interesting and picturesque with many such. We remember the old "Black Bull" in Edinburgh where Coleridge had the nightmare and dreamed

he was dying and composed in his sleep this epitaph :

"Here sleeps at length poor Col. and without screaming
Who died, as he had always lived, a dreaming;
Shot dead, while sleeping, by the gout within,
Alone, and all unknown, at E'nbro' in an Inn."

Someone has made a book of descriptions of curious old tavern signs. Even America can furnish some. Tradition has it that in front of the old Red Lion Inn at Stockbridge, Massachusetts, the winds of long ago used to swing a sign which bore the picture of a bright red lion with a bright green tail. That was before there was any such functionary as Brander of Nature-Fakers.

The name given to an inn, like the title given to a book, may be matter of interest and importance, and attract by its striking oddness or felicitous aptness. What more fit and suggestive than "Windwhistle Inn," an old Wessex hostelry, situated on the crest of a hill where the road went over the ridge and all the winds of heaven had full sweep, so that August sometimes howled like November; or "Night's Rest Inn," on the old English post road, where the stage coach stopped at sunset, and the tired horses were unhitched and stabled for the night, and the passengers rested until morning; or Albert A. Leroy's goodly "Pine Tree Inn," set in the midst of the Jersey Pines?

Every traveler knows the comfort there is in

having a good inn to look forward to at the end of one's journey. The chord of a common and familiar, but not trivial, experience is struck by a Wessex poet in his lines:

“Having beaten afoot the northward way
Throughout the hours of the livelong day,
As the sun drew down to the west
We climbed the toilsome Polden crest
And saw, of landscape sights the best,
The inn that gleamed thereby.
Then Polden top at last we won
And gained the inn at sink of sun,
Far-famed as ‘Marshal’s Elm.’ ”

Most of us can imagine how those jaded pedestrians felt when they sank on the settle by the hearth, with the slant rays of the setting sun signaling through the west window that the long, hard day was done and realized how good it is to find shelter and fire and food at journey's end and a bed at weary sleep-time. Even the robust and healthy walker who exults with himself, “So many thousand buffets have mine own two feet given the resisting soil 'twixt sun and sun,” is glad enough to find at the day's end some pleasant hostelry with all needed provisions for his comfort. And most of us know how interesting it is to sit within, snugly sheltered in the glowing comfort of the inn, watch the new arrivals, and note the glad faces of travelers through mud and drenching rain as they come dripping in to dry themselves before the landlord's fire, or out of a

blizzard come stamping in, snow-covered, from the tussle with blustering elements.

In many a human life the roads are sometimes rough and steep, and there is many a man to whom, as he tramps the long, slow miles, perhaps with some heavy pack on his back, the prospect of an open door and an unfeigned welcome at the end of that journey and a chance to halt and lie down and sleep and forget is the best hope he then has in all this mortal life; there is many a soldier on the march so exhausted that knapsack and musket are a burden, and then all his longing is centered on the time and place of camping for the night; possessed by that one thought and craving, he forgets the past and recks not of the morrow. Even to men as woeful, forlorn, dejected, and preoccupied as a certain historic two who footed it over the hills on the Emmaus road, spent from some awful days and nights of horror and anguish, it was doubtless some small comfort to look forward to finding a night's rest at Emmaus far from the cruel city when it should be toward evening and the day far spent: for nothing is more exhausting than heart-breaking sorrow, tragic and ghastly calamity, and unutterable grief, for which there is sometimes no immediate earthly relief but in sleeping and, for a time, forgetting. There may be night-falls and journey endings when, to poor, weak, worn human nature, the dearest of all Scripture will seem "He giveth his beloved sleep." After

"the wine of astonishment," and the vinegar, wormwood, and gall, a drink of some sirup that can minister slumber is welcome to the lips. And heaven often does its best for bitter thoughts and intolerable sorrow when it sends weariness and night to administer the blessed anodyne of unconsciousness. Poor Alfred de Musset, disillusioned and heart-sick, worn out with the sordid tragedy of his Epicurean life, murmured thankfully at the wretched end of his gay career, "At last I am going to sleep."

Whether on foot, on horseback, or in coaches, we are all on a journey over the same road; we are but passing travelers who will not come this way again, who will presently go out of sight beyond the Great Divide. In the long hereafter all the annals of human history will seem but tales of a wayside inn; for this old earth is only an Inn, a temporary lodging-place, and we are "transients" in the Hotel of the World. Our psalm in this house of our pilgrimage is the hymn:

"I'm a pilgrim and I'm a stranger;
I can tarry, I can tarry but a night."

As one cheerful vagabond says, "We are but lodgers for a night in this old Wayside Inn of Earth; to-morrow we shall take our pack and set out for the ways beyond, on the old trail from star to star." Happy we if our path beyond be among the stars, and our journey end in the city

of Many Mansions. Well for us now if we take the New Year's advice of Dr. George Clarke Peck to his flock to "greet each new day with a cheer, looking to the Father's House at the end of the road."

SOME NEWSPAPER VERSE

BEFORE us lies a book of verse entitled *Canzoni*, by T. A. Daly. It is a book of gathered-up newspaper poetry not up to magazine grade, most, if not all, of it printed first in newspapers, as was also, we believe, much of Whitcomb Riley's poetry, which has had very large and, we are told, very lucrative sale. Poor John Milton, it is said, got twenty-five dollars for his immortal *Paradise Lost*, read now by how many of Riley's and Daly's readers, we wonder? This little book has sold many thousands. And subsequent volumes like it kept coming, until every day a new poem by Daly appeared in some newspaper, so that we had to spell his name "Daily." Most of his verses are in some dialect, a few in Irish, fewer in Negro, and the most in Italian, of which last Mr. Daly has nearly a monopoly, so far as we know. One may here see what newspapers judge that the everyday man dearly loves to read. The home-sickness of the Irishman finds sure and sweet expression in this "Song of the Thrush":

"Ah, the May was grand this mornin'!

Shure, how could I feel forlorn in

Such a land, when tree and flowers tossed their kisses
to the breeze?

Could an Irish heart be quiet
 While the spring was runnin' riot,
 An' the birds of free America were singin' in the trees?
 In the songs that they were singin'
 No familiar note was ringin',
 But I strove to imitate them an' I whistled like a lad.
 O, my heart was warm to love them
 For the very newness of them—
 For the ould songs that they helped me to forget—an'
 I was glad.

"So I mocked the feathered choir
 To my hungry heart's desire,
 An' I gloried in the comradeship that made their joy
 my own,
 Till a new note sounded, stillin'
 All the rest. A thrush was trillin'
 Ah! the thrush I left behind me in the fields about
 Athlone!
 Where, upon the whitethorn swayin',
 He was minstrel of the Mayin',
 In my days of love and laughter that the years have
 laid at rest;
 Here again the notes were ringin'
 But I'd lost the heart for singin'—
 Ah! the song I could not answer was the one I knew
 the best."

These verses on "The Butt of the Loafers" appeared in the newspapers:

"O! they needn't be so sly,
 All them lads when I pass by,
 Wid their winkin' o' the eye
 An' their jokin' an' all that.
 Sure, I'm wise enough to see
 That the cause of all their glee
 Is the ancient cut o' me
 An' me ould high hat.

"Yerra! boys will have their play,
 So I've not a word to say—
 'Tis mesel' that wanst was gay
 As the gayest wan o' you;
 An' there wasn't manny men
 That'd care to joke me then,
 When me blood was warm an' when
 This ould hat was new.

"It was wid me an' me bride
 When the blessid knot was tied,
 An' it follied, when she died,
 Where they soon will lay me, too.
 It has served me all these years,
 Shared me pleasures an' me tears—
 As it's sharin' now the jeers
 O' the likes o' you!

"Now, ould hat, we're worn an' sick,
 But 'tis joy to think, avic,
 That you never held a brick—
 An' there's some that can't say that!
 So they needn't be so sly
 Wid their winkin' o' the eye
 When they see us passin' by,
 You an' me, ould hat!"

Daly might almost be called the Laureate of Little Italy, in which office his dialect verses are delightful. No one can help liking "An Italian King":

"I am so good for evratheeng
 I ougha be electa Keeng!
 Ees no som'body else at all
 So strong like me, so beeg, so tall,
 An' no som'body else can do
 So greata theengs like I can, too.

How mooch you try you no can be
 So fina beega man like me.
 You bat my life! I oughta gat
 A crown for wear eenside my hat,
 An' makin' all da style I can,
 Baycause I am so granda man.
 All dees ees true. Eh? how I know?
 My leetla boy he tal me so.

"You maka fun weeth me an' tease,
 An' call me 'Dago' eef you please;
 An' mebbe so I what you call
 'No good for anytheeng at all.'
 An' you weell theenk you speaka true
 Baycause eet looka so to you.
 Wal, mebbe som'time you are right,
 But not w'en I gat home at night.
 Ha! dat'sa time dat I am Keeng
 An' I am good for evratheeng!
 I know; baycause Patricio,
 My leetla boy, he tal me so."

Little Italy's frugal life is seen in Joe D'Annunzio's "Change of Diet":

"Yestaday, w'en da wheestle blow noon,
 Joe D'Annunzio lay down hees spade,
 An' he's feedin' heemsal' pretta soon
 From hees deenner-pail here een da shade.
 W'en da 'Merican boss ees com' by
 From dat eatin' house over da way,
 'Deesa costa da food ees so high
 Eet ees keep a man busted,' he say.
 'Eet ees verra small lunch dat I eat—
 Som' roas' beef an' potato an' pie
 An' a leetla bit sauce for my meat—
 But eet's costa me seventy-fi',
 An' I don'ta see how you can pay
 For da fooda dat keep you so fat.'
 'O! I make fine deenner,' Joe say,
 'Weeth da onion an' bread an' tomat'."

"An' to-day w'en da wheestle blow noon
Here's D'Annunzio eatin' som' more;
Comes da 'Merican boss pretta soon
An' he mak' da keeck like bayfore.
'Som' potato an' cabbage an' ham,
An' som' cream an' som' peaches,' he say,
'Dat ees all dat I eat, but, by dam,
Eet ees costa me ninety to-day!
An' you're eatin' da bread an' tomat'
Lika yestaday. My! eet ees strange;
Don't you nevva gat tire' of dat
An' try deeferent food for a change?'
'Sure! da yestaday's deenner,' Joe say,
'Was tomat', bread, an' onion for me,
But eet's deeferant now, for to-day
I ain't eatin' no onion, you see.'

Here is one merchant who reports that business is looking up, and sings this song of "Prosperity":

"Who say dat beezzanes ees blue
An' times ees hard? Eet ees no true.
You bat my life! I nevva see
Sooch trade like now ees com' to me.
Ah! lees'en, an' I tal to you.

"Las' fall w'en first I com', my frand,
For keep dees small peanutta stand,
Eet was too playnta beega 'nough
Baycause I sal so leetle stuff.
But now so many com' for buy
Banan', peanutta, cak' an' pie,
I soon mus' gat, I am afraid,
Fine beega store for serve my trade.
Den mebbe, too, I gona see
To sal da coffee, milk, an' tea
For customer dat aska me.
You be su'prise' for see how fine
Ees all dese customers of mine,

An' so polite dey eat deir food,
An' look so nice, an' talk so good.
O! dere ees wan, so beeg, so tall,
He ees da grandes' wan of all!
An' w'en he eat hees pie, my frand,
An' I am watch heem go an' stand
Een doorway of dat beeg hotal
On Broadway, dat ees so swal,
An' se heem peeck hees teeth an' smile
An' bow een soocha granda style
To all hees frands dat passa by,
I am so proud I like to die!

"Eef times ees hard you s'spose I gat
So fina, beega trade like dat?
From all dat I am tal to you
Can dees 'bad beez'ness' talk be true?
Eh! w'at?
I bat you, not!"

New Yorkers, just now, can listen feelingly to Angelo's account of his first "Lesson in City Politics":

"I no care for gattin' meex'
Een dees ceety politeecs.
I no gatta vote, an' so
I no weeshin' mooch to know
W'eech side right an' w'eech side wrong;
I no bother mooch so long
Dey no bother mooch weeth me—
I jus' want do beez'ness, see?
I no like poleecaman
Com' to dees peanutta-stan',
Like he do most evra day,
Jus' for talka deesa way;
'Wal, my frand, I tal you w'at,
Politeecs ees gattin' hot.
Don't you mind all dessa queer
Talka 'bout da "graft" you hear.

Notheeng een eet!' (Here he tak'
 Bigga pieca geenger cak'.)
 'Dees "Reforma" mak' me seeck!
 Sucha foolish theengs dey speak!

"'All dees "graft" ees een deir eye.'
 (Now he taka pieca pie.)
 'I been een dees politeecs
 Seexa year an' know da treecks,
 But I tal you I ain't met
 Any kinda grafta yet.'
 (Here he taka two banan'.)
 'Evra publeec office man
 Worka for a salary
 Jus' da sama lika me.
 We no want no more dan dat—
 Jus' contant weeth w'at we gat.'
 (Dent he tak' weeth botha hand
 Som peanutta.) 'So, my frand,
 Don't baylieva all dees queer
 Talka 'bouta "graft" you hear.'

"Nutta, caka, pie, banan',
 All for wan poleecaman!
 Mebbe ees no 'grafta'—say!
 W'at ees 'grafta', anyway?"

Delicious, indeed, is this story about Tony, the
 asthete, worshiper of the Beautiful, entitled
 "The Blossomy Barrow":

"Antonio Sarto ees buildin' a wall,
But maybe he nevva gon' feenish at all.
 Eet sure won'ta be
 Teell flower an' tree
 An' all kinda growin' theengs sleep een da fall.

"You see, deesa 'Tonio always ees want'
 To leeve on a farm, so he buy wan las' mont'.

I s'posa som' day eet be vera nice place,
 But shape dat he find eet een sure ees 'deesgrace';
 Eet's busta so bad he must feexin' eet all,
 An' firs' theeng he start for build ees da wall.
 Mysal' I go outa for see heem wan day,
 An' dere I am catcha heem sweatin' away;
 He's liftin' beeg stones from all parts of hees land
 An' takin' dem up to da wall een hees hand!
 I say to heem: 'Tony, why don'ta you gat
 Som' leetla wheelbarrow for halp you weeth dat?'
 'O! com' an' I show you w'at's matter,' he said;
 An' so we go look at hees tools een da shed.
 Dere's fina beeg wheelbarrow dere on da floor,
 But w'at do you s'pose? From een under da door
 Som' mornin-glor' vines have creep eento da shed.
 An' beautiful flower, all purpla an' red,
 Smile out from da vina so pretty and green
 Dat tweest round da wheels an' da sides da machine.
 I look at dees Tony an' say to heem: 'Wal?'
 An' Tony he look back at me an' say 'Hal!
 I no can bust up soocha beautiful theeng;
 I work weeth my han's eef eet tak' me teell spreeng!'

"Antonia Sarto ees buildin' a wall,
 But maybe he nevva gon' feenish at all.
 Eet sure won'ta be
 Teell flower an' tree
 An' all kinda growin' theengs sleep een da fall."

Here is the dialect of the East Side City Kid
 giving his opinion of "The Country-Week Kid":

"Say, all de kids is purty slick
 W'at runs aroun' our way,
 But dey ain't none kin shake a stick
 At little Patsy Shea.
 W'y, he kin pitch de 'in' an' 'out,'
 An' onct 'e trun a drop,
 An' he's de kin' youse read erbout
 Fur dodgin' frum a cop.

An' w'en it comes ter jumpin' trains
An' hoppin' off agen,
Dere's where 'e shows 'e's got de brains
Uv half er dozen men.
An shootin' crap an' marbles—say
He win an' never try;
Dey ain't no flies on Patsy Shea,
But, gee, how he kin lie!

"W'y, say, youse knows de Country Week,
W'at takes de poor kids out
An' gives dem grub an' country air,
An' lets dem run erbout?
Well, dey're de people w'ats ter blame
Fur all de lies we hear
Since Patsy run ag'in deir game
An' started actin' queer.
Dey on'y had 'im out a week,
But 'fore I'm t'rough dis pome
I'll tell youse how he lied a streak
As soon as he got home.
'E tried ter bull uz kids; but, say,
I guess we're purty fly,
An' we jist laugh at Patsy Shea
W'en 'e begins ter lie.

"Foist lie 'e told wuz how 'e went
A-swimmin' in a creek,
An' how nobody cared a cent
If he had swimm'd a week.
Dey wuz'n' any cops, 'e sed,
As fur as youse could see;
An' dey wuz cherries, ripe an' red,
A-growin' on a tree,
An' youse could eat 'em if youse please
Till youse could eat no more.
An' apples grow'd on udder trees
Like w'at's in Clancey's store.

He told us all dese lies, 'e did,
An' never winked his eye—
O! Patsy Shea's a clever kid,
But, gee, how he kin lie!"

But not all of Daly's poems are in dialect. For example, these two on "The Old Parishioner" and "The Building Inspector," both persons whom many ministers have met:

"The graybeard glories in the past
And prates of 'good old days.'
These times are out of joint, he growls,
And sneers at modern ways.
He shakes his head at every move
That's up-to-date and new,
And everything you do is just
The thing you shouldn't do.
It's: 'Mercy save us! Look at that!
We're slidin' back, I fear.
The parish isn't what it was
Whin Father Mack was here.

"The weddin's now are not as fine
As weddin's used to be,
An', faith, they're not so numerous
At all, at all,' says he.

"Then, christ'nin's, too, were plentiful
An' carried out wid style;
'Twould warm your heart to seen them there
A-crowdin' up the aisle.
An' sermons! How the crowds would come
To listen! Dear, O! dear,
The parish isn't what it was
Whin Father Mack was here."

"Yet, from a study of the rolls
And records, 'twould appear
The parish claimed but fifty souls
When Father Mack was here."

And here is the well-known self-appointed supervisor of church erection :

“When ground is broken on the site
For your new church, some busy wight
Is certain to assume the right
To pose as chief inspector.
He deems it quite the thing that he
Should represent the laity,
And watch the builder’s work and see
He doesn’t cheat the rector.

“Of course the whole thing’s badly planned,
He tells you, and you understand
How good it is that he’s at hand
To check some greater blunder.
The mortar’s bad. He breaks a crumb
Between his finger and his thumb,
And shakes his head and murmurs, ‘Bum!’
Who sold ‘em that, I wonder?”

“Thus after church each Sunday morn,
With mingled pity, grief, and scorn,
He goes about on his forlorn
Grim duty of inspection.
But, no, not every Sunday though—
That statement’s not exactly so—
Some Sundays you take up, you know,
The building fund collection.”

Tears and laughter are in Daly’s verses. In “Dirty Little Fingers” he touches the same human chord that sounds in Eugene Field’s “Little Boy Blue” :

“From the moment he could stand alone and toddle
Across the bedroom floor from chair to chair,
There was never any respite for his mother;
He was getting into mischief everywhere.

There were somersaults distracting down the stairway,
And tumbles off the sofa, to be sure,
And the bumps he got were really quite terrific,
But none a mother's kisses couldn't cure.
He'd a most plebeian fondness for the kitchen,
Whose precincts were his favorite retreat,
And the coal-hod held for him a fascination,
For he seemed to think it's contents good to eat.
But the thing that caused his mother's greatest worry,
And made her ply her house-cloth o'er and o'er,
Was his subsequent invasion of the parlor
With his grimy little fingers on the door.

"How the whiteness of the paint was desecrated
By those dirty little digits every day!
Though his weary mother wept and begged and scolded,
He pursued the even tenor of his way.
It was evident that he was only happy
When his fingers held their share and more of dirt,
And the only thing he loathed was soap and water,
And, O my, goodness gracious! how that hurt!
But it hurts us now to contemplate the cleanness
Of everything about this quiet place;
All the finger marks that used to mar the woodwork
Have disappeared, nor left the slightest trace.
For the last of them was wiped away last summer,
Glad summer that is gone forevermore!
We are lonely, Lord, and hungering to see him,
With his grimy little fingers on the door."

We began by calling T. A. Daly a newspaper poet; not in disparagement, be sure, but in characterization; it may be to his praise. His verses are so close to the level of our common, everyday life that they can be caught on the fly as we run, so near to the primitive universals that they touch all sorts and conditions of men. Far be it from us to disparage newspaper poetry! Some

of it is worth watching for, and helps to redeem the page from sordidness and vulgarity and wickedness and filth. Did we not this very day light upon this pithy and far-reaching verse on Miracles all alone by its suggestive self in the bottom corner of the editorial page of our daily newspaper :

“In order rolled each starry sphere,
A babe was born, a raindrop fell,
And yet he wearied heaven’s ear
By asking for a miracle.”

For this relief much thanks to McLandburgh Wilson, and for this other fine bit from the same source, “The Important Happening” :

“An eagle strong
His pinions spread
And through the sky
On conquest sped.

“A joyful lark
In wings elate
Poured out his song
At heaven’s gate.

“With lordly step
From side to side
A peacock spread
His beauty wide.

“An angel wrote
His chronicle:
‘Behold, this day
A sparrow fell!’”

These verses set us at the feet of Jesus to learn

from him to be meek and lowly of heart, and to find rest unto our souls.

A man who could touch the stars but often wallowed in the sty, wrote in one of his exalted moments "A blade of grass is no less than the journey-work of the stars; and the running blackberry would adorn the parlors of heaven; and a mouse is miracle enough to stagger sextillions of infidels."

CHRISTINA ROSSETTI'S DEVOTIONAL PROSE

EVEN the most scholarly and learned may find refreshment, stimulus, and probably instruction in the religious meditations of intelligent and thoughtful saints who are not professed theologians; and no small part of the value of Holy Scripture may consist in the meanings evoked therefrom by the spiritually minded and experienced who know not Greek or Hebrew, and who read the Bible, not critically, but absorbingly, with the insight of the pure in heart and for the good which a sincere and loving soul may find therein.

Miss Rossetti was a godly as well as gifted woman who thought for herself and was deeply experienced up and down the octaves of the devout soul's possible life. All her force and feeling went with her intense religious convictions and firm faith in Christian doctrine. In her writings we perceive, not only the simplicity of a spirit too sincere to pretend, but the precision, directness, and soberness of a trained mind as well. Even the most mystical of her devotional prose and verse is kept wholesome by pervasive sanity and sound sense, exhibiting, not the unclear and vaporish sentimentalizing of a weak

woman, but the steady step of a compact and capable intelligence along hallowed paths, and offering pregnant sayings, sensible homilies, cheerful exhortations, and wise disquisitions. Considering that she had the poetic temperament, with both a genius and a passion for symbolism, and was naturally rather more apt at imaginative embellishment than at close reasoning, it is remarkable that she should touch theological themes with so much knowledge and discretion. But this brilliant symbolist does not feel at liberty to indulge her propensity to symbolism simply for the sake of the pleasure which a fertile ingenuity finds in its own free exercise, and it is evident that she is restrained from taking poetic liberties with precise Truth by the fear of the Lord and by conscientious reverence for the inviolable sanctity of his Word. Against unwarranted symbolism and excessive typology in our interpretations of Scripture we may all be warned by the words with which she admonishes herself:

Symbolism affords a fascinating study; wholesome so long as it amounts to aspiration and research; unwholesome when it degenerates into a pastime. As literal shadows tend to soothe, lull, abate keenness of vision, so perhaps symbols may have a tendency to engross, satisfy, and arrest souls which are incautious, unwatchful, and unprayerful lest they enter into temptation.

Nevertheless, without resort to uninspired and justifiable symbolism, it was inevitable that the

Divine Word should be immensely suggestive to her sanctified mind, which found plain passages pregnant with, or pointing to, great meanings, which penetrated by intuition to the heart of sacred matters, and flashed a searchlight into mysteries profound. She is thrilled by the transcendent sublimity of the biblical language, and perceives the depth of the riches stored in the Holy Book. To the feast of fat things spread therein she sits down, not with a critic's captiousness, but with a hearty and healthy appetite, not for chemical analysis, but for delectable mastication and nutritious assimilation of the finest of God's wheat. While best known for the gorgeous diction and brilliant imagery of those sacred poems which set her in the select company of Herbert, and Vaughan, and Crashaw, and Southwell, and Herrick, and Keble, and Faber, and Cardinal Newman, and which associate her as a woman in her own time with Adelaide Procter, Jean Ingelow, Dora Greenwell, and Elizabeth Barrett Browning, Miss Rossetti also poured no small portion of herself into the list of devotional prose works entitled *Annus Domini*; *Seek and Find*; *Called to Be Saints*; *Letter and Spirit*, or *Notes on the Commandments*; *Time Flies*; and *The Face of the Deep*, the latest, longest, and noblest of her prose volumes, a semiexpository meditation on the book of Revelation, the chief lesson of which book she considers to be patience. As might be expected from a nature whose very

pulse-beats were rhythmical, a subtle unmarked rhythm often makes her prose as musical as poetry, and scattered here and there through the volumes just named are bits of verse, "exquisite solemn lyrics, fervid and intense in their piety, ecstatic in their rapture."

Not all of Miss Rossetti's writings are on sacred themes. Among her poems are bird-songs, child-songs, laughing lyrics, and many a piece of airy fantasy full of gayeties and frolicsome imaginings. Yet, beyond question the value of her life is found in her religious writings, glorified by their glowing faith and intense with the passionate devotion of a saintly woman's soul. Flowers, like other earthly objects, are to her emblems of holier things. "Hope is like a harebell trembling from its birth"; "Faith is like a lily lifted white and high." How fully the natural was to her a mirror of the supernatural, and things physical were parables of things spiritual, is seen in the "Parable of Nature" which she saw one summer night when the gas was lighted in her little room and she perceived on the paperless bare wall a spider puzzled and frightened at his own shadow which he could not understand or get away from. This poor self-haunted spider, running madly about and trying to disengage himself from the horrible inalienable pursuing presence, was to her a symbol of the impenitent sinner who, having outlived enjoyment, remains isolated irretrievably with his own hor-

rible, loathsome self. Among the thoughts most constantly present with her are the misery and exceeding sinfulness of sin and the subtlety and dreadful peril of temptation. "The Goblin Market," one of her most important productions, is an allegory of temptation and redemption; and the poem entitled "Amor Mundi" is an allegory of how love of the world inevitably leads to destruction, the beaten way it treads being "hell's own track." Her sense of the universal need of forgiveness is seen in the prayer she offers after reading the words in Rev. 15. 4, "For thou only art holy." This is her prayer:

O Lord Jesus Christ, who only art holy, forgive, I implore thee, forgive and purge the unholiness of thy saints, the unholiness of thy little ones, the unholiness of thy penitents, the unholiness of the unconverted, the unholiness of me a sinner. God be merciful to us sinners. Amen.

The true insight and balanced judgment of this positive and unwavering believer are seen in her comment on the doubt of Thomas: "St. Thomas doubted. Skepticism is a degree of unbelief; equally, therefore, it is a degree of belief. It may be a degree of faith. St. Thomas doubted; but simultaneously he loved. Whence it follows that his case was all along hopeful." A capacity for pungency marks her sharp word concerning atheism: "Devils are not atheists; we are emphatically certified that they believe and tremble. . . . Atheism appears to be a possibility confined to a lower nature. 'No man hath seen

God at any time': that flesh and blood, which cannot inherit the kingdom of God, may, if it will, deny his existence." To her invisible things are visible, and a populous spiritual world is near and real and vivid. She sees the spirits of the blessed martyrs, luminous and lovely. She believes that even here we are surrounded by unseen hosts in whose company we shall hereafter rejoice in a world without end. She takes the Scriptures literally and believes in guardian spirits watching over us. She thinks "dear angels and dear disembodied saints, unseen around us," who dwell in glory which we cannot see, wonder that our hearts so often faint and our steps lag along the heavenward way. She loves God all the more "because he hath given his angels charge concerning his own to keep them in all their ways; because the armies of heaven pitch their camp around the faithful when need arises; because blessed spirits minister to the heirs of salvation; because they rejoice over one sinner that repenteth. . . . When it seems (as sometimes through revulsion of feeling and urgency of Satan it may seem) that our yoke is uneasy and our burden unbearable, because our life is pared down and subdued and repressed to an intolerable level; and so in one moment every instinct of our whole self revolts against our lot, and we loathe this day of quietness and sitting still, and writhe under a sudden sense of all we have irrevocably foregone, of the right hand, or foot, or

eye cast from us, of the haltingness and maimedness of our entrance (if enter we do at last) into life—then the Seraphim of Isaiah's vision making music in our memory revive hope in our heart."

The deep problems of religion and theology fascinated her to much reading, study, and thought, and to some discussion. The old inscrutable mystery of the origin of evil she sought to penetrate, but came only to this conclusion:

Absolute darkness engulfs me when I attempt to realize the origin of evil. Yet in that darkness, which may be felt, one point I dare not hesitate to hold fast and assert: evil had its origin in the free choice of a free will. Without free will there can be neither virtue nor vice; without free choice neither offense nor merit.

The difficult problem of Divine prescience and human free will she discussed with her friend Rev. W. Garrett Horder, editor of *The Poet's Bible*, of which discussion she says:

He once put it to me that the choice of each man's free will must be unknown beforehand even to God Omniscient himself. To foreknow would involve to preordain, and that which is ordained is not free:—so, I suppose, my friend might have gone on to argue, handling a mystery far beyond my comprehension. . . . But limited Omniscience is a contradiction in terms. A being, any one of whose attributes is limited, cannot be our Infinite Lord God.

Once she illustrates her point against Mr. Horder by telling him that her foreknowledge that he will take kindly what she writes to him does not compel him to do so.

Of the devil she writes :

Being a destroyer, our safety lies in recognizing, acknowledging, fleeing him as such. And further: so far as we are constituted our brother's Keeper, our brother's safety lies in our plainly calling him a destroyer; and never toning him down as a negation of good, or even unloathingly as an archangel ruined. Sins for like reason should be spoken of simply as what they are, never palliatingly or jocosely. Lies and drunkenness should bear their own odious appellations, not any conventional substitute. But some sins "it is a shame to speak of"; true: so let us not speak of them except under necessity; and, under necessity even, always truthfully. "Woe unto them that call evil good, and good evil; and put darkness for light, and light for darkness; that put bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter." . . . Whilst studying the devil I must take heed that my study become not devilish by reason of sympathy. As to gaze down a precipice seems to fascinate the gazer toward a shattering fall, so is it spiritually perilous to gaze on excessive wickedness, lest its immeasurable scale should fascinate us as if it were colossal without being monstrous.

And then she continues the expression of her views by a quotation from her sister Maria Francesca's *Shadow of Dante* in which Dante's Lucifer is contrasted with Milton's Satan and commended as being the wiser and truer description of the two. Maria wrote :

Some there are who, gazing upon Dante's Hell mainly with their own eyes, are startled by the grotesque element traceable through the *Cantica* as a whole, and shocked at the even ludicrous tone of not a few of its parts. Others seek, rather, to gaze on Dante's Hell with Dante's eyes; these discern in that grotesqueness a realized horror, in that ludicrousness a sovereign contempt of evil. . . . They remember that the Divine Eternal Wisdom himself, the

very and infallible Truth, has characterized impiety and sin as Folly; and they feel in the depths of the nature wherewith he has created them that whatsoever else Folly may be and is, it is none the less essentially monstrous and ridiculous. . . . A sense of the utter degradation, loathsomeness, despicableness of the soul which by deadly sin besots Reason and enslaves Free Will passes from the Poet's mind into theirs; while the ghastly definiteness and adaptation of the punishments enables them to touch with their finger the awful possibility and actuality of the Second Death, and thus for themselves as for others to dread it more really, to deprecate it more intensely, Dante's Lucifer does appear "less than Archangel ruined," immeasurably less; for he appears Seraph willfully fallen. No illusive splendor is here to dazzle eye and mind into sympathy with rebellious pride; no vagueness to shroud in mist things fearful or things abominable. Dante's devils are hateful and hated, Dante's reprobates loathsome and loathed, despicable and despised, or at best miserable and commiserated. . . . Dante is guiltless of seducing any soul of man toward making or calling Evil his Good.

As regards whatever leads to temptation, especially temptation through the senses, Christina Rossetti is of opinion that a rule of avoidance, rather than of self-conquest or even of self-restraint, is a sound and scriptural rule:

For the Jews were bidden . . . absolutely to do away with all idols and to obliterate every trace of idolatry; not one image might they hoard as a curiosity, or an antiquity or a work of art; neither were they encouraged, even if under any circumstances it might be lawful for them, so much as to investigate the subjects of heathen rites. . . . "Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be; but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is. And every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure." Blessed indeed are

the pure in heart, for they shall see God. With such a beatitude in view, with so inestimable a gain or loss at stake, with such a prize of our high calling in Christ Jesus to yearn for, all we forego, or can by any possibility be required to forego, becomes—could we but behold it with purged impartial eyes—becomes as nothing. True, all our lives long we shall be bound to refrain our soul and keep it low: but what then? For the books we now forbear to read, we shall one day be endued with wisdom and knowledge. For the music we will not listen to, we shall join in the song of the redeemed. For the pictures from which we turn, we shall gaze unabashed on the Beatific Vision. For the companionship we shun, we shall be welcomed into angelic society and the communion of triumphant saints. For the amusements we avoid, we shall keep the supreme Jubilee. For the pleasures we miss, we shall abide, and forevermore abide, in the rapture of heaven. It cannot be much of a hardship to dress modestly and at a small cost . . . if with a vivid conviction we are awaiting the white robes of the redeemed. . . . Solomon in all his glory was outdone by a lily of the field, and all his glory left him a prey to sensuality, and this launched him into shameless patronage of idol worship; until the glory of his greatness and the luster of his gifts, combined with the heinousness of his defection, have remained bequeathed to all ages as an awful warning.

This pure and shielded woman, full of innocence, has a keen and alarmed sense of the dangerous allurements of evil, and, full of gentleness, maintains and inculcates a sternly uncompromising attitude toward all sin. To imperiled souls this is her exhortation :

Strip sin bare from voluptuousness of music, fascination of gesture, entrancement of the stage, rapture of poetry, glamour of eloquence, seduction of imaginative emotion; strip it of every adornment, let it stand out bald as in the Ten stern Commandments. Study sin, when study it we

must, not as a relishing pastime, but as an embittering deterrent. Lavish sympathy on the sinner, never on the sin. Say, if we will and if we mean it, Would God I had died for thee; nevertheless let us flee at the cry of such, lest the earth swallow us up also.

The deep emotion and holy aspiration excited in this devout disciple by her reverent searching of God's word are seen in the prayer evoked in her by the contemplation of the Saviour's passion:

Let thy pierced Heart win us to love Thee, thy torn Hands incite us to every good work, thy wounded Feet urge us on errands of mercy, thy crown of thorns prick us out of sloth, thy thirst draw us to thirst after the Living Water thou givest; let thy Life be our pattern while we live, and thy Death be our triumph over death when we come to die. Amen.

Similar in style and spirit are other noble, stately, and uplifted prose litanies addressed to Christ, full of adoration and supplication, of which the following is a fair example:

"Lord Jesus, lovely and pleasant art thou in thy high places, thou Center of bliss, whence all bliss flows. Lovely also and pleasant wast thou in thy lowly tabernacles, thou sometime Center wherein humiliations and sorrows met.

Thou who wast Center of a stable, with harmless cattle and some shepherds for thy Court,

Grant us lowliness.

Thou who wast Center of Bethlehem when Wise Men worshiped thee,

Grant us wisdom.

Thou who wast Center of the Temple, with doves or young pigeons and four saints about thee,

Grant us purity.

Thou who wast Center of Egypt, which harbored thee and
thine in exile,

Be thou our refuge.

Thou who wast Center of Nazareth where thou wast
brought up,

Sanctify our homes.

Thou who wast Center of all waters at thy Baptism in the
River Jordan,

Still sanctify water to the mystical washing away
of sin.

Thou who wast Center of all desolate places during forty
days and forty nights,

Comfort the desolate.

Thou who wast Center of a marriage feast at Cana,

Bless our rejoicing.

Thou who wast Center of a funeral procession at Nain,

Bless our mourning,

Thou who wast Center of Samaria as thou sattest on the
well,

Bring back strayed souls.

Thou who wast the Center of all heights on the Mount
of Beatitudes,

Grant us to sit with Thee in heavenly places.

Thou who wast the Center of sufferers by the Pool of
Bethesda,

Heal us.

Thou who wast Center of all harvest ground when Thou
wentest through the cornfields with thy disciples,

Make us to bring forth to Thee thirty, sixty, a
hundredfold.

Christina Rossetti inherited in an exceptional degree the artist temperament; romance, melody, and exquisite delight in beauty were born in her and rippled through her veins with her Italian blood. But this affluent and efflorescent nature was chastened and spiritualized, every imagination brought into subjection to Christ and dedi-

cated to his service. Keenly alive and enamored as she was of all beautiful things in the world, she had learned that nothing else is half so lovely as are "the hands which have worked the works of Christ, the feet which treading in his footsteps have gone about doing good, the lips that have spread abroad his name, and the lives which have been counted loss for him." Successive bereavements brought her to know the feeling of those who are oppressed with a sense of the transitoriness of life and who can find at times no glory in the sky nor music in the murmur of the breeze because everything on earth is visibly passing away, while at such times the peace of an unreachd and unseen heaven seems placed too high; and sometimes in moments of depression and physical weakness her thoughts of death take on a somber and repulsive realism. Yet she bore her sorrows, and prolonged suffering as well, with submissive patience, sustained by the conviction that God's angel, Death, would release her from pain and admit her to a state of ineffable blessedness. Her life was pure, sweet, and gracious, so that a London journal could say: "Her noblest books were those books without words which she lived"; in like manner, as she herself wrote concerning her *Notes on the Commandments*, "My mother's life is a far more forcible comment on the commandments than are any words of mine."

With her writings in verse and prose before

us it seems safe to agree with her eulogists, who say that as long as Christianity remains as it is, the most vital and dominant force in the lives of many millions of English-speaking people, the name of Christina Rossetti is likely to be honored and cherished in the list of illustrious writers who have enriched the literature of Christian teaching by their consecrated genius.

THE VOLUMINOUS UNIMPORTANCE OF POSITIVISM

WE know of no modern system of thought that is at once so intellectually pretentious and of so little account as positivism. Nothing aspiring to be regarded as a religion is so ambitious in its scope, and so elaborate in its presentation, or propounded with a brow so grave and weighty, and yet withal is so unimportant, as the so-called Religion of Humanity. Both its inventor, Auguste Comte, and its apologist, Frederic Harrison, have been voluminous writers. Comte was the author of numerous volumes, of which he devoted to the setting forth of his scheme of doctrine more than a dozen: his *Positive Philosophy* (6 volumes), his *Positive Polity* (4 volumes), his *Subjective Synthesis*, his *General View*, and his *Catechism*. Mr. Harrison is also author of a dozen or more volumes, some of which are directly given to the exposition and advocacy of his particular version of Comte's system, and all of which take their perspective from the positivist point of view and color their atmosphere with the Religion of Humanity. His two most recent books are *The Creed of a Layman* and *The Philosophy of Common Sense*. Comte's scheme, interpreted by Harrison, purports to be a vast synthesis of knowledge equaled in inclu-

siveness among ancients only by Aristotle's and among moderns only by Herbert Spencer's. Yet this ambitious and laborious scheme, offered as a substitute for Christianity, is of far less importance to the Christian world than, for example, Parseeism is: indeed, its practical significance is almost microscopic.

It is certainly numerically unimportant. A census to ascertain the number of positivists in London found seventeen. Andrew Lang, commenting upon Harrison's book, *The Creed of a Layman*, remarks, "It is not the creed of many laymen—only about thirty-five and a half, as the irreverent say." Mr. Harrison expresses a doubt whether since the death of Auberon Spencer, Herbert Spencer has any follower. We are of opinion that Mr. Harrison has even fewer followers than Mr. Spencer. Mr. Harrison does not think it reasonable to expect that positivism should draw disciples by thousands as, he says, the gospel did in the days of the apostles. He is quite right in so thinking; and it seems proper to add just here, for the information of those who, like Mr. Harrison, appear not to know the fact, that the gospel which was so powerful in apostolic days proves itself just as mighty now, and in many lands is drawing vast multitudes to the feet of Him who was lifted up that he might draw all men unto him. It is hardly too much to say that positivism draws nobody. Its inventor was an impractical theorist but little acquainted with

human nature, its qualities or its needs. He lived and died an obscure teacher of mathematics in Paris. The intellectual atmosphere in which he worked out his theories and constructed a new religion for mankind was about as rarefied as are the regions of the differential calculus and as remote from actual human life as is the summit of Mount Kunchin-Ginga or the planet Jupiter. And it is about as attractive to the average human being as is the working out of an algebraic problem.

The attempt to get people to worship the human race meets insurmountable difficulties. To the normal man the proposition to worship humanity is simply preposterous. One trouble with positivism's worship is the obvious and extremely marked undivineness of its offered divinity. Human nature as found is not preeminently godlike. Mr. Huxley said he would as soon worship a wilderness of apes as Comte's rationalized conception of humanity. Moreover, what positivism presents for our worship is a mere abstraction. "The Great Being, Humanity"? There is, there can be, no such being; there are only men and women. No one will adore an abstraction. The worship of human beings is not unknown. Men do worship Humanity, but in sections, in very definite, individual and apprehensible sections. The old servitor in "The Flight of the Duchess," speaking of the fair young serving maid, says: "Since Jacynth was

like a June rose, why a humble adorer of Jacynth of course was your servant." Those who incline to the worship of humanity prefer to have it in a form as real, as vividly and tangibly concrete as Jacynth. No metaphysical abstraction for them.

Wholly theoretical and utterly impracticable is the Comte-Harrison positivist religion of humanity. Not of its inventor or of its interpreter will it ever be said as was said of Lord Kelvin, lofty scientist and lowly Christian, over his newly buried remains in Westminster Abbey under the shadow of Sir Isaac Newton's tomb, that he "united in extraordinary degree the speculative and the practical faculties of the human intellect": "The greatest reasoner at work in physics in his time, and at the moment of his death without dispute the greatest scientific genius in the world." A reasoner, a thinker, a mathematician, beside whom the obscure little teacher of mathematics, named Comte, was an insignificant pigmy. The scientific world proudly claims for Lord Kelvin reverence because of his matchless genius and because of gratitude for the immeasurable value of his practical services to the whole human race. He never undertook to construct or invent a new religion to take the place of Christianity; and, curiously enough, in contrast with the voluminousness of positivism's apostles, he wrote only one book, a volume on a part of analytical mechanics, and that in collaboration with Professor Tait.

The only living apostle of positivism tells us that it takes years to master the full meaning of its scheme of thought as a whole. In the nature of the case only the leisure class could find time to study it; and the leisure class do not study. There are perhaps several persons who think they know just what positivism is, but they cannot tell to any great extent. They are like the pupil who, when standing examination in geography, said he knew what country Vienna was the capital of, but "lacked the flow of language to express it." The only one who has the flow of language to express what positivism is, luminously and voluminously, seems to be Mr. Frederic Harrison, an amiable, fluent, and engaging expounder, the one exponent in our day of the system of doctrine called positivism, which Mr. Huxley described as "Catholicism minus Christianity." One irreverent person spoke of it as consisting of three persons and no God, the three persons being Mr. Harrison and two obscure coadjutors. Auguste Comte, the originator of positivism, hoped for a kind of political papacy which would regenerate society by the exercise of authority. Stuart Mill called positivism the completest system of spiritual and temporal despotism which ever emanated from a human brain, excepting possibly that of Ignatius Loyola. It is claimed that Mr. Harrison has propounded a more definite and systematized substitute for the police power than

any other that has been devised. But what Mill said of the despotic character of the scheme is so true that its establishment in an age of freedom would be utterly impossible. Goldwin Smith pointed out the want of originality in positivism's scheme, its best being borrowed from Christianity. He said that "Comte's great Being, Humanity, is Christ's brotherhood of man under another name." So the scheme has the unimportance of superfluity. More than once in *The Creed of a Layman* Mr. Harrison acknowledges the efficiency of Christianity. On page 192 he says that the religion of Moses and of Christ has proved itself able to "guide lives, curb passions, give light to despair, and import unconquerable force to societies, nations, races." Until something appears that can do all this miraculous work better, it is "good business" to let the religion of Moses and of Christ go on attending to it, and thank heaven for giving us something which, by the confession even of its enemies, can do it. The Gospel is in no danger of being superseded. Christianity is content to abide by the pragmatic test, "By their fruits ye shall know them." Positivism, with all its august, imposing, and pretentious intellectualism, would be numbered by Carlyle among what he denominated "rosewater imbecilities." Its vast mental effort has only succeeded in adding to what Andrew Lang calls "the vast dreariness of ineffectual things." Positivism is no match for the vicious-

ness of human depravity and the virulent malignancy of wickedness. On the non-Christian side it is of far less consequence than the Salvation Army is on the Christian side. Positivism might be proud of itself if it had one thousandth part of the Army's efficiency and power for good. The Army adds one more to the list of things effectual. The convicts at Sing Sing would jeer positivism off the premises: "Adore the great Being, Humanity? Human nature as we know it is far from being adorable." What would Frederic Harrison offer to Maud Ballington Booth as a substitute for the parable of the prodigal son? Positivism cannot lift even the intellectual level of the masses of mankind because it does not reach them. Lecky, the historian, a freethinker pledged to no church, says that Methodism "raised the standard of intellect in England to a degree no man can compute." No historian is likely ever to make such a record concerning positivism. Henry M. Stanley, the African explorer, once wrote: "When I was at Lake Victoria, eighteen years ago, there was not a missionary there. Now there are forty thousand Christians and two hundred churches. The natives are enthusiastic converts, and would spend their last penny to acquire a Bible." How long would it take the missionaries of positivism to accomplish such a result? But we forget; positivism has no missionaries, as also it has no Bible. The China Times, a paper published in

Tientsin, not under missionary influence, recently bore the following testimony to the power of Christianity: "The fact is that without persistent missionary work and without strong missionary influence here, life in Tientsin would soon be intolerable for foreign residence. The active influences for good in this town are almost all the results of or intimately connected with the missions. The influence of the missions is far greater in Chinese centers than at the treaty ports. The daily life in many of the inland towns and villages would be vastly different were it not for the mission influence. . . . It is a singular thing that of the hospitals, schools, churches, benevolent societies, soldiers' and sailors' homes, temperance societies, the anti-opium work, the work in alleviation of the effect of vice as well as for its prevention, almost all is the product, in whole or part, of mission influence, or promoted or maintained by persons intimately associated with the missions. In short, the philanthropic work in China, as at home, is mainly religious. One looks in vain for hospitals or schools supported by disciples of Herbert Spencer, or for an anti-opium fund maintained by followers of Haeckel. [This is equally true of the disciples of Comte.] If the philosophic searchers for truth of these non-Christian creeds had ever roused a people from apathy to activity in an unselfish cause, or had ever produced anything but selfishness and self-consideration, they might have some

value. At this moment, when the long, steady and patient work of many years is beginning to show its fruit, when the greatest reform movements that China has ever known are beginning to take shape, when vice is beginning to climb down and the opium dealers to close their shops, when, in short, the silent work is developing into that which everyone can see—this is not the time when missions can feel disheartened.” Not in any spot on earth has the alertest newspaper discovered any such results produced by or under any of the non-Christian creeds. “By their fruits ye shall know them.” The non-Christian creeds are scant of fruits. The Christian gospel stands supreme and sole as the one potent and effectual force for the salvation, elevation, and amelioration of the world; and all the laboriously elaborated schemes of non-Christian philosophies attain only to a tediously voluminous unimportance. Nearly thirty years ago Frederic Harrison spoke of “The final issue of the mighty Assize of religions, which this generation and the next are destined to try out.” We must be nearly half way through that “mighty Assize.” Does any Christian feel dismayed? Is there anywhere on earth the faintest sign which indicates that the gospel of Jesus Christ is to be superseded by positivism, the most marked characteristic of which is its voluminous unimportance?

THE VOGUE AND VERSATILITY OF WONDERLAND ALICE

ALICE was a little girl, daughter of Doctor Greek-Lexicon Liddell, aged "exactly seven," who fell down a rabbit-hole in a mathematician's mind on the grounds of Oxford University, and, after many unparalleled adventures, came to the surface for a career of popularity apparently boundless and endless.

Few things so pique curiosity as a dark mystery, and few mysteries are so secretive and teasing as an apparently inhabited hole, whether of rabbit, or rat, or chipmunk, or prairie-dog, or snake, or salamander, particularly to individuals of an investigating turn of mind such as children, cats, scientists, ferrets, and terriers. Into any such opening the quest for wonder is likely to go head foremost. A hole has various values. To many a hunted creature a convenient and easily accessible one has been a welcome refuge. At sundry times and in divers places an excessively unpopular person has been advised by his fellow citizens to crawl into his hole and pull the hole in after him.

A rat-hole has been definitely listed among personal assets by a high authority in the following prudent private letter of recommendation, written many years ago in Springfield, Illinois:

Mr. —— is a lawyer of some reputation. He has a wife and two children that ought to be worth a good deal to a man. He has an office with a desk and some chairs in it, and a rat-hole that will bear looking into. I can recommend him for any position that he is fit for.

Yours truly,

A. LINCOLN.

To fall into a hole is not considered good fortune, and to fall down a rabbit-hole into immortal fame is contrary to all human experience, the height or, rather, the depth of improbability. Yet we have the record of that event from an ought-to-be-veracious clergyman of the Church of England, a mathematically exact authority in higher calculus, who, traveling incognito, registered as "Lewis Carroll" at the road houses in the country of Light Literature.

Alice made her first appearance over fifty years ago and has not yet announced a farewell appearance, but is still the most popular little girl in the world. She, with her drolly solemn troupe, the Gryphon, the Mock Turtle, the Walrus, the Oysters, the Mad Hatter, the Cheshire Cat, and all the rest of her grave-gay merry-makers and wisdom-mongers, entertains her vast public with a continuous performance three-hundred-and-sixty-five days in every year. She has passed into the consciousness of the English-speaking race. Hugh Walpole says the Mad Hatter and the Mock Turtle have become part of the English language. We judge that Alice is untranslatable into any other tongue. No circus

that ever came to town matches her for setting all small boys and small girls wild. She is like the Pied Piper of Hamelin, who, when he piped his tune, had the town's children dancing after him in flocks; but with this difference, that her magic spell spares neither sex nor age, but "mows the bearded grain at a breath and the flowers that grow between." Children of all ages from six to seventy follow in her train. In Chicago the street urchins are out looking for her. A little girl stops at the door of Jane Addams' Hull House, where Wonderland is sometimes staged, and asks, "Does Alice in Wonderland stay here always?" That young children flock after her is not strange; but learned and venerable scholars and even bishops and other clergy also succumb to her charms. A. C. Benson remembers seeing Bishop Lightfoot, during a long day's coach-drive in Wales, sitting all the way immersed in a small red book, refusing to look at the scenery, and every now and then exploding with laughter which made the tears run down his face. He was reading Alice in Wonderland. Again, when A. C. Benson tries in these anxious days to warn us against becoming victims of worry, he calls on Alice to tell us that if we get into the habit of carrying too many cares on our mind we will invoke upon ourselves the fate of the bread-and-butter fly in *Through the Looking-Glass*, whose food was weak tea with cream in it. "But supposing it cannot find any?" said Alice.

"Then it dies," says the Gnat, who is acting the part of interpreter.

"But that must happen very often!" said Alice.

"It *always* happens!" says the Gnat with somber emphasis.

But Alice is not alone the Play Girl of the Western world and of the English-speaking race; she is out at service as a sort of universal drudge, a maid of all work in the House of Life, with tasks so many and so multiplex as to recall the saying of the devout little boy in a very religious home who heard so many prayerful persons asking God to do so many things that he remarked one day: "God must have a great many things on his mind. I don't think I'd like to be God."

Alice is the most versatile and variously accomplished of little girls, the most sought-after and extensively useful assistant to all manner of persons and all kinds of enterprises and industries. Beginning as Alice in Wonderland, she has become Alice in Congress, in the Chamber of Commerce, in the courts, in journalism, in university assemblies, in after-dinner speeches and even in such unlikely places as the pulpit and Wall Street. If she has not quite achieved omnipresence, she seems to be aiming at it; and she is more in need of a hundred hands than Briareus was. Her indispensability grows more and more apparent every day.

Alice pervades magazines and newspapers. She appears in the Yale Review and the Hibbert

Journal, and from time to time in other high-class reviews. On one and the same day she can be found on the editorial pages of four New York dailies, presenting the Walrus' tears and the Carpenter's doubt and the Oysters' protests against being eaten.

Alice is in State's prison. Thomas Mott Osborne's three-hundred-page account of his week spent voluntarily as a prisoner in Auburn Prison summons Alice from Wonderland with the Mad Hatter's conundrum, "Why is a raven like a writing-desk?" the propounding of which to prisoners would seem like "cruel and unusual punishment," as did the preaching of a venerable chaplain to the convicts, one of whom complained of it as illegal, telling the keeper it was no part of his sentence that he should be compelled to hear that man preach.

Alice is helpful in the courts of law, sometimes spoken of as courts of justice, but occasionally characterized otherwise. The New Republic tells us that the records and documents in the United States government's dissolution suit against the Steel Trust made such an enormous pile, amounting to carloads, that the Federal Court at Trenton, New Jersey, which took four years to study the mass and decide the case, had to call on Alice to furnish extra help. And, says the veracious New Republic, Alice sent Bill, the Lizard, to assist the overworked stenographers and typewriters by writing out part of the rec-

ords with his finger on the slate as he did in the famous case of the stealing of the Queen's Tarts.

Politics and government cannot go on without Alice. The blistering New York Sun said that the history of the government's course in a certain matter read like a chapter from Alice in Blunderland. In a campaign to down Tammany one of the great dailies warned the city that a certain party was misleading the public to follow Alice down a rat-hole into the Wonderland of Political Delusion.

In Washington Alice is kept busy. Woodrow Wilson's Congress did not complete the revision of the tariff without invoking the wisdom of Wonderland, and seeking advice from Alice's Caterpillar. One day the Senate Committee on Foreign Relations called Alice into its private office, not to be dictated to like a stenographer but to dictate like a British militant suffragette, as if she were an authority on diplomacy and international law. In Washington the newspaper correspondents rely much on Alice. For example, they find Alice's "Jabberwocky" indispensable in their efforts to describe certain members of Congress—the Jabberwocky that, "with eyes of flame, came whiffing through the tulgey wood, and burred as it came."

Alice has been employed to criticize the doings of Congress. Some years ago a disgruntled Bostonian wrote concerning a bill proposed by a member of the House, named Hay:

"I have just been reading the provisions of the Hay Army bill; discouraged by this travesty on preparedness, I turned to the Looking Glass Country for refreshment. Was it allegory or prophecy which I found there recorded in the conversation of Alice with the King?

" 'Another sandwich!' said the King.

" 'There's nothing but hay left now,' the messenger said, peeping into the bag.

" 'Hay, then,' the King murmured in a faint whisper.

" 'There's nothing like eating hay when you're faint,' he remarked to Alice as he munched away.

" 'I should think throwing cold water over you would be better,' Alice suggested.

" 'I didn't say there was nothing better,' the King replied. 'I said there was nothing like it.' Which Alice did not venture to deny."

Alice has been seen in the theater. The author of "The Girl from Utah" found that the Salt Lake lady could not play her part properly without the aid of the Girl from Oxford; so Alice had to be brought across the sea, though it is a longer way in every sense from Oxford to Utah than from Flanders to Tipperary.

Alice is in the market reports. "The Sun which shines for all," in discussing the high cost of living, said that one of the specious explanations put forward to excuse the high price of apples sounded like Alice in Buncombeland. "If

you see it in the Sun it's so" sometimes: but at any rate the Sun has a genius for ingenious paraphrastic pilfering.

Not without Alice can the problems of science and philosophy be settled. One writer shows that the Darwinian theory of evolution can be most easily overthrown by the aid of Alice and the methods of the Mad Hatter. An eminent scholar of the Church of Rome, discussing Bergson's Philosophy and the Divine Fecundity, goes behind the Looking Glass with Alice for illustrations and analogies. With all due reverence be it said, we almost wonder how Dr. Lynn Harold Hough could finish his wonderfully keen, tingling, brilliant book, *The Quest for Wonder*, without some reference to Alice, who was so much at home in her Wonderland. Actually while we read it we kept glancing down the bypaths to see if she were not hiding somewhere in the shrubbery and listening surreptitiously to his story of his real wonderland, the Wonderland of the Soul. Now, to crown all, Gilbert K. Chesterton declares that Hans Andersen and Lewis Carroll have written the final philosophy of life; so that anybody who offers disrespect to the Mock Turtle or the Gryphon or the Jabberwocky must reckon with the doughty pugnacity of Mr. Chesterton, besides having the Cheshire Cat grinning at him and the Queen shouting "Off with his head!"

Alice is of assistance to professional critics of music in New York who cannot express their

meaning without resorting to her for aid in articulating. One of those hypersensitive and expressive creatures helps us to a full understanding by telling us that to a present-day audience "the old arias in Euryanthe seem like Alice in Wagner-Land popping out"—a statement of imperfect clarity and truculent ingenuity.

Alice was John Tenniel's best friend and fame-maker. When that famous cartoonist of London *Punch* died at the age of ninety, more mention was made of his illustrations for *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* and *Through the Looking Glass* than of his greatest political cartoons, some of which in their day powerfully affected public opinion and possibly influenced the destiny of nations.

No library, however large or small, is complete without Alice. An author of note being asked to name the six books he would select to solace his solitude if left alone on a desert island for a year, included *Alice's Adventures*, "because," he said, "it is full of the enchantment of pure imagination and makes one feel again the joy of childhood and youth."

Theodore Roosevelt knew that the pig-skin library, which he carried with him for his year of hunting big game in the wilds of Africa, could not do without her, and *Alice in Wonderland* was one of the books he took with him. When he came back from the jungles a Literary Review commenting on the series of addresses he de-

livered in Norway, France, Germany, and England, said his style indicated that he had adopted the advice of the Duchess in Wonderland: "Take care of the sense and the sounds will take care of themselves." No adventures the jungle might furnish him could possibly equal hers in incredible wondrousness. The wildest heart of Africa is tame commonplace compared with Alice's Wonderland. The Smithsonian Institution will admit that it has no beasts like hers.

If Harvard's venerable ex-president wishes to make his list of books for "a liberal education five feet long" really complete, he must give Alice a place on the shelf. Also, parenthetically, he might improve his "new religion three feet long" by adding some expression of the faith which was Lewis Carroll's and which was once thus expressed: "Most assuredly do I accept to the full the doctrines that Christ died to save us, that we have no other way of salvation open to us but through his death, and that by faith in him, and through no merit of ours, we are reconciled to God: and most assuredly I can cordially say, 'I owe all to Him who loved me and died on the cross of Calvary for me.'"

Dr. R. C. Cabot, Harvard professor of Medicine, in his wise, noble, stimulating, and illuminating book, *What Men Live By*, protests against confining children too much to dry textbooks, and increases the popularity of Alice by calling her to testify that in Wonderland the

School History of England was used for wiping dry the wet company around the pool of tears, because the Dodo said, "It's the dryest thing I know." Another physician, however, Sir William Osler, apparently deplores the popularity of Alice, for he gravely remarks that the reading of Lewis Carroll's yarns by so many people is proof that the world is still in its childhood and not yet ready to put away childish things. Well, if Alice can prove that we are still youthful and if tours through Wonderland can help to keep us so, we shall not be so much in need of Dr. Osler's medical services to postpone arteriosclerosis of body and of mind and ward off Mrs. Partington's condition which she described as "getting old and infernal."

All envious, caviling, morose high-brows are notified that Lewis Carroll is more popular than they are by the fact that a copy of the first edition of his immortal classic has been sold in London for one thousand dollars, the record price for a book by any modern author. Few books have contributed so much to the pure gayety of nations as those of Lewis Carroll. Even an Adirondack winter at the Lake Placid Club might become dull and dreary if Alice did not arrive to enliven the place by staging the Mad Tea Party and the Mock-turtle scene; though the grotesqueries of Wonderland scarcely exceed in queerness the distortions and contortions in orthography achieved by the Josh Billings "scool"

of misspelling, whose chief branch office appears to be at Lake Placid.

The vogue and versatility of Alice are certainly phenomenal for a little girl "exactly seven," so genuinely feminine that she never grows any older.

Sydney Smith wrote to a little girl, "Mind your arithmetic: without arithmetic life would be a howling wilderness." It is equally true that without Alice this world would be a desert waste.

Many years ago Fales H. Newhall, in a summer letter to Zion's Herald, described in his masterly fashion the glories of a gorgeous sunset, and then said: "Have you seen all this? If not, see it this day lest, when you lift up your eyes over the landscapes of heaven, you be ashamed to have the angels ask you to tell them about the sunsets of earth."

To all childlike souls of whatever age, from six to seventy, it is proper to say: Have you read *Alice in Wonderland* and *Through the Looking Glass*? If not, read them this day, lest when you appear in good society anywhere on earth or in heaven, the very children (those innocents who are of the kingdom of heaven) put you to shame by exposing your ignorance of the very rudiments of a liberal education.

Those who are of the Kingdom of heaven may reasonably expect to find transcendent enchantments in their quest for wonder when they fare forth upon what Charles Frohman, on the slant-

ing deck of the sinking Titanic, called "life's most beautiful adventure." For "eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him," in the Wonderland of the Hereafter.

VAGABOND ECHOES

BLISS CARMAN is one of the real poets of America; clean, high-minded, blithe, as surely born to sing as is the lark, the oriole, or the nightingale, his singing as genuine as the bobolink's ecstasy. It seems a long time, all too long, since we had a volume from him. One of his admirers, weary of his silence, wrote to his publishers a while ago: "What has become of Bliss Carman? Has he stopped being poet? Please wake him up and tell him we miss him." He added *Echoes from Vagabondia* to the *Songs from Vagabondia* which delighted us years ago. The authorship of those *Songs* Bliss Carman shared with Richard Hovey. Singing afterward alone, he called his later songs *Echoes from the dear old days of comradeship and wandering*. These lines of remembrance are touched with the ache of missing:

"'Tis May now in New England,
And through the open door
I see the creamy breakers,
I hear the hollow roar.

"Back to the golden marshes
Comes Summer at full tide,
But not the golden comrade
Who was the Summer's pride."

And these verses seem like another loyal and loving look backward to Richard Hovey:

"We traveled empty-handed
With hearts all fear above,
For we ate the bread of friendship,
We drank the wine of love.

"Through many a wondrous autumn,
Through many a magic spring,
We hailed the scarlet banners,
We heard the blue-bird sing.

"We looked on life and nature
With the eager eyes of youth,
And all we asked or cared for
Was beauty, joy, and truth.

"We found no other wisdom,
We learned no other way,
Than the gladness of the morning,
The glory of the day."

Bliss Carman dedicated his *Echoes* to one who is described as "a spirit undismayed, confronting fortune with a gentle mirth, with love alike for Heaven and for Earth, thinking no ill, going her devious ways, seeing the beauty round her all her days, playing her quiet part with tender strength and with a woman's heart." "The Last Day at Stormfield" is on the final hours of "our great funning friend," Mark Twain, who made his generation laugh with his wit, putting smiles on even the faces of "keen-eyed, serious men who watch the sorry world and the gaudy pageant of life with pity and wisdom and love"; and who leveled

his merciless mirth at pompous shams. At Stormfield, his Connecticut home, on the last day of his life, Mark Twain for the last time opened a book. It was one of Carlyle's, that "dour and rugged philosopher who looked askance upon life, lurid, ironical, grim, yet sound at the core." He wearied quickly, laid the book and his glasses down on the bed, fell asleep, and in that sleep at twilight ceased to breathe. Bliss Carman fancies our American humorist in the other world consorting with Chaucer and Shakespeare and Molière, with Cervantes not far off, and jesting with Dagonet, King Arthur's Fool. Kipling, too, is quoted as saying that "the great Clemens" was some relation to Cervantes. These glad *Echoes* are mostly of the spring, the summer, the seashore, the hills, and the woods, but also of the city. "The Urban Pan" is the hurdy-gurdy man who returns when the magic days of spring bring stronger sun and milder air, the hand-organ man, swarthy and hairy, smiling up at your open windows expectant of dimes or nickels or coppers, casting his spell upon the town.

"And so he follows down the block,
A troop of children in his train,
The light-foot dancers of the street
Enamored of the reedy strain.
I hear their laughter rise and ring
Above the noise of truck and van,
As down the mellow wind fades out
The piping of the urban Pan."

Our poet, playing pagan for a while, as poets in their love of nature sometimes do, fancies he really hears the pipes of the Greek god Pan in the Catskills:

"They say that he is dead, and now no more
The reedy syrx sounds among the hills,
When the long summer heat is on the land.
But I have heard the Catskill thrushes sing,
And therefore am incredulous of death,
Of pain and sorrow and mortality.

"In those blue cañons, deep with hemlock shade,
In solitudes of twilight or of dawn,
I have been rapt away from time and care
By the enchantment of a golden strain
As pure as ever pierced the Thracian wild,
Filling the listener with a mute surmise.

"At evening and at morning I have gone
Down the cool trail between the beech-tree holes,
And heard the haunting music of the wood
Ring through the silence of the dark ravine,
Flooding the earth with beauty and with joy
And all the ardors of creation old.

"And then within my Grecian heart awoke
Remembrance of far-off and fabled years
In the untarnished sunrise of the world,
When clear-eyed Hellas in her rapture heard
A slow mysterious piping wild and keen
Thrill through her vales, and whispered, 'It is Pan!'"

Is there anything or anybody now left that has not yet been set in verse by some singer? Daly makes himself the city laureate of Little Italy and glorifies the "Dago." Bliss Carman makes himself laureate not only of the hurdy-gurdy man, but, in his most notable city poem, of the

familiar woman who helps drag the street-organ through the streets. His point of view is outside the southeast entrance to Central Park, in sight of the equestrian statue of General Sherman. Here is what he saw and says:

"One August day I sat beside
A café window open wide
To let the shower-freshened air
Blow in across the Plaza, where
In golden pomp against the dark
Green leafy background of the Park,
Saint Gaudens's hero, gaunt and grim,
Rides on with Victory leading him.

"The wet, black asphalt seemed to hold
In every hollow pools of gold,
And clouds of gold and pink and gray
Were piled up at the end of day,
Far down the cross street, where one tower
Still glistened from the drenching shower.

"A weary white-haired man went by,
Cooling his forehead gratefully
After the day's great heat. A girl,
Her thin white garments in a swirl
Blown back against her breasts and knees,
Like a Winged Victory in the breeze,
Alive and modern and superb,
Crossed from the circle to the curb.

"We sat there watching people pass,
Clinking the ice against the glass
And talking idly—books or art,
Or something equally apart
From the essential stress and strife
That rudely form and further life,
Glad of a respite from the heat,
When down the middle of the street,

Trundling a hurdy-gurdy, gay
In spite of the dull-stifling day,
Three street musicians came. The man,
With hair and beard as black as Pan,
Strolled on one side with lordly grace,
While a young girl tugged at a trace
Upon the other. And between
The shafts there walked a laughing queen,
Bright as a poppy, strong and free.
What likelier land than Italy
Breeds such abandon? Confident
And rapturous in mere living spent
Each moment to the utmost, there
With broad, deep chest and kerchiefed hair,
With head thrown back, bare throat, and waist
Supple, heroic and free-laced,
Between her two companions walked
This splendid woman, chaffed and talked,
Did half the work, made all the cheer
Of that small company.

“No fear
Of fallure in a soul like hers
That every moment throbs and stirs
With merry ardor, virile hope,
Brave effort, nor in all its scope
Has room for thought or discontent,
Each day its own sufficient vent
And source of happiness.

“Without
A trace of bitterness or doubt
Of life's true worth, she strode at ease
Before those lordly palaces,
A simple heiress of the earth
And all its joys by happy birth,
Beneficent as breeze or dew,
And fresh as though the world were new
And toil and grief were not. How rare
A personality was there!”

In tribute to a very different character, Bliss Carman pauses "On Burial Hill," at Concord, in the old burying-ground where Concord men first laid their dead, and tells of the inscription in honor of the village pastor :

"There stands simple, square, and unadorned,
Our grandsire's altar tomb.
Upon its dark gray slated top
The long inscription reads,
In stately phrase his townsmen's praise
Of his deserts and deeds.

"Their 'pastor of the Church of Christ,'
They wish the world to feel
The 'luster' of his ministry,
His 'meekness' and his 'zeal.'
I doubt not he deserved it all,
And not a word of ill;
For they were just, these men whose dust
Lies here on Burial Hill.

"Perhaps we wear the very guise
And features that he wore,
And with the look of his own eyes
Behold his world once more.
Would that his spirit too might live,
While lives his goodly name,
To move among the sons of men,
'A minister of flame.'

"O, might his magic gift of words,
Not wholly passed away,
Survive to be a sorcery
In all men's hearts to-day,
To plead no less for loveliness
Than truth and goodness still.
God rest you, sir, his minister
Asleep on Burial Hill!"

One of these Echoes is a poet's reply to a little boy's question on his Christmas lesson about the Wise Men from the East: "Why were they three, instead of five or seven?" One is on the words, "He leadeth me beside the still waters; he restoreth my soul." It is difficult to choose among these forty poems, and tastes would differ; the one which most holds us is entitled "Mirage." Its five pages are too long to quote and its story is not easy to condense, but its argument is just and true and glorious. The great truth in solution in its hundred and seventy lines is that man is the culmination of all earthly grandeurs, the consummation and crowned king of the world, Nature's supreme and only use being to act as a setting for man's significance and to serve his needs. That is the meaning of Bliss Carman's saying that Beauty is "the superb eternal noun which takes no verb but love." A painter spends an enchanted summer at little Siasconset on the seaward side of the Island of Nantucket. At the season's end there stands upon his easel the most significant of all the summer's work. One day he had strolled along the beach to "Tom Nevers Head, the lone last land that fronts the ocean, lone and grand as when the Lord first bade it be for a surprise and mystery." There, all alone in the vast solitude of sea and shore and moor, the conviction came to him of the worthlessness of the earth by its mere self. He saw and felt that beauty and grandeur are nothing

without soul, and that it is the presence and the power of man the godlike that alone give meaning and use and reason to the world of nature; that earth's intention and *raison d'être* is to be the arena and the setting for the human soul, with its aspirations and struggles, its joys and sorrows its loves and prayers and victories, its toils and triumphs, its exultations and its tears. Then he gave himself to putting this sublime conviction on canvas. He painted first as powerfully as he could a picture of the sea and shore and sky, far outspread and high uplifted with all their majesty, beauty, and splendor of color, and then he painted into the middle of his picture "a vivid questing human face, up-gazing against the blue with eyes that heaven itself shone through, the lips half-parted as in prayer, scanning the heavens as if asking grace and confident of kindness from above; a face as tender as a happy girl's, where meet repose and ardor, strong and sweet; looking as Virgin Mary might have looked into the annunciation angel's eyes with faith and fearlessness and innocence." The artist made all the glory and wonder of the universe bend and lean about that human head. And when he had finished the picture, a sermon on canvas, into which he had put his meaning with all his might and skill, he stands before it and proclaims its significance thus:

"In other years when men shall say,
'What was the painter's meaning, pray?

Why all this vast of sea and space,
Just to enframe a woman's face?"
Here is the pertinent reply,
'What better use for earth and sky?'"

To us this is the noblest of all the poems in these *Echoes from Vagabondia*. In these *Echoes* we hear Bliss Carman owning his subjection to the seductive spell of elemental things breathing on him through the nature-sounds he hears:

"My forest cabin half-way up the glen
Is solitary save for one wise thrush,
The sound of falling waters and the wind
Mysteriously conversing with the leaves."

Our poet sitting at night by that seat and shrine and reservoir of primal elements, the hearth-stone, sings his closing verse:

"The stormy midnight whispers,
As I muse before the fire
On the ashes of ambition
And the embers of desire,
'Life has no other logic
And time no other creed
Than: "I for joy will follow
Where thou for love dost lead."'"

A soul might say that to its divine Saviour and Lord.

BEATING THE DRUM OF ETERNITY.

JAMES HUNCKER, brilliant literary critic, wrote of *Eternity and the Town-Pump*, the vast encompassing the minute, the trivial overarched by the tremendous, the commonplace embosomed in the sublime. In 1912 three men of mark in the intellectual world came across the Atlantic to speak to American audiences: Rudolf Eucken, of Germany; Henri Bergson, of France; Alfred Noyes, of England; men of eminence and fame in philosophy and literature, as well known probably to the reading public in this country as in Europe; masters of thought and speech who, in Andrew Carnegie's phrase, "carry in their hearts and brains the magic contained in words and can apply it to their fellow men"—men not of the sort that "darken counsel by words without knowledge," nor like the congressman of whom Speaker Reed said, "That man never speaks without subtracting something from the sum-total of human knowledge; we know less when he ends than we did when he began."

The significance which Eucken, Bergson, and Noyes possess in common is that they are messengers of the spirit and exponents of the spiritual life, whose utterances are equivalent to beating the drum of eternity amid our absorbing secularities, and in the midst of an irreverent,

gainsaying, and profane generation calling on the Zeitgeist to lead in prayer. We may help ourselves to prize them and value their visit by reflecting how different and how disturbing would have been the effect if Europe had sent us three of its arch-unbelievers and scoffers, haters of religion and despisers of Christianity, to mock and flout the things of the spirit, to preach among us materialism's infinitely harmful no-gospel of dirt and despair; or had sent three of its reckless iconoclasts and rabid revolutionists to pour upon our American populace their violent, vicious, and virulent vocabularies, assailing the foundations of religion and morals, defying authority and government, and so menacing all order and security, political, social, and religious. Of these three ambassadors and advocates of the spirit, Eucken, Bergson, and Noyes, the young poet appears quite worthy to stand with the two famous philosophers; being not without a clear, coherent, and creditable philosophy of his own akin to theirs, and seeming quite as well equipped for his sphere and service as they for theirs.

That Alfred Noyes is not without significance, noteworthy and exceptional, has been certified in the estimate put upon his work by such judges as Kipling, Swinburne, Edmund Gosse, Theodore Watts-Dunton, and others similar, who, we are told, have rated him the most considerable English poet since Tennyson.

His first public visit to this country served to make him and his significance more distinct and vivid to the American public; and nothing in the closer view of the man himself detracted from the impression made previously by his works and by English indorsements.

Since personal appearance counts for something in revealing a man's significance, it may be noted to begin with that the whole look and bearing of this young athlete marked him as farthest possible from being an effeminate dreamer or dilettante. On his arrival here the newspapers sent their skilled reporters to "size him up" at his first public appearances and in private interviews. One wrote: "This square-jawed, close-cropped, clean-cut young man looks more like a fighter than like a poet." Another described him as "manifestly endowed with the heaped-up blessings of youth and health, the sturdy birthright of a Briton, a poet's mind, a taste for argument, a business sense, and the tact of a diplomatist"—undeniably an extraordinary assemblage of qualities and capacities to be found in the person of a young poet at the age of thirty-two.

Those who met Alfred Noyes were struck with his quiet manner and unpretentious bearing, as natural and unaffected in his young manhood as his greatly simple and simply great fellow countryman Ambassador James Bryce, under his weight of years and honors. They were im-

pressed with the clearness and force of the young poet's criticisms and the gentleness of his judgments; with his approachableness and readiness to converse, and with the modest candor of his replies to questions about himself and his work.

When nine years old he awoke early one morning and felt an impulse to write a poem, which he did. At fourteen he wrote an allegorical epic of thousands of lines, but did not publish it. At sixteen he had read practically all the English poets, liking best Shelley and Keats, and Wordsworth and Tennyson, and Swinburne. His first printed poem was "The Symbolist," which appeared in the London Times when he was nineteen and an Oxford undergraduate, achieving reputation as an athlete, but unknown in literature. The fecund years since then have brought many volumes from his pen. At thirty-two he was the most widely popular of living English poets except Kipling. He caught even the college girls. The Barnard graduating class rendered his "Sherwood," a version of Robin Hood, on the college campus by moonlight and electricity.

The significance of Alfred Noyes is not cryptic and esoteric, perceptible only to literary highbrows and experts, but so obvious and luminous as to give him a large popular vogue. His vigor, joyousness, and grace won the English-speaking world. Clayton Hamilton attributes this popularity to the fact that Noyes is healthy, happy, and young, and amplifies his statement as

follows: "Mr. Noyes is thoroughly in love with life. He is productive because he is healthy; and he is various because he is divinely capable of being interested in a number of things. His healthiness of spirit is a boon for which to give thanks. Nothing is the matter with his body or his soul. In this age of morbid introspection he never looks upon himself to curse his fate. He never whines or whimpers. He religiously believes in being happy; and his triumphal youthfulness is a glorious challenge to the sort of maunderers who are forever saying, 'Ah! but wait till you have suffered!' His sense of tragedy is not morbid and lachrymose, but vigorous and terrible. After all the moanings and the caterwaulings of the sorry little singers, we have found at last a poet to whom this world is not a twilit vale of tears, but a valley shimmering all dewy to the dawn, with a lark song over it."

The sanity and earnestness of his writings compelled sober men to regard poetry not as the eccentric offgivings of a moonstruck imbecile, or the frothing of an epileptic fit, but as in his case the serious art of a sound-minded man capable of living and behaving like other men. He is emphatically a man of pith and purpose, not one of those

"Light half-believers of a casual creed,
Who never deeply felt nor clearly willed,
Who hesitate and falter life away."

He sets himself with stout and indignant con-

tradiction against those who see in man's existence only

"A life of nothings, nothing worth,
From that first nothing ere his birth
To that last nothing under earth."

He sees in human existence a significance deep, high, and vast, and declares with Browning:

"This world's no blot or blank;
It means intensely and means good.
To find its meaning is my meat and drink."

As part of an author's or artist's self-revelation, it is always of interest to learn his personal preference among his own works, to hear, for instance, from Hiram Powers that he chooses his Greek Slave, and from Thomas Ball that he likes his Eve best; to be told that Maud was one of Tennyson's favorites, though we wonder why; and to hear Edwin Markham confess that, on the whole, if he must choose, he would select his Semiramis, at which we do not wonder. So also we attend when Alfred Noyes, being questioned, answers, "I believe of all my longer and more ambitious efforts I like best '*The Flower of Japan*' and '*The Forest of Wild Thyme*.'" Of these a judicious critic says: "They are generally conceded to be two of the purest flights of lyric verse ever written. They form a sequence, and are written about the adventures of a band of children in fairyland; no ordinary fairyland, but

a different fairyland conceived by Noyes' own brain, almost the quaintest, eeriest land o' dreams ever limned."

Few things help so much to an understanding of any author and his work as to hear him read from his own productions; the whole personality actively interpreting, vivifying, and enforcing the meaning through every tone and accent and inflection, every look and attitude and gesture; as in Tennyson's deep-voiced and impassioned renderings of his perfect poems to select friendly circles, or Dickens' public readings to crowded audiences from his works. "The Battle Hymn of the Republic" was never so stirring and affecting as when Julia Ward Howe recited it. Richard Watson Gilder's quivering and tender reading of his own tribute at the Stedman memorial meeting gave to the lines a deeper pathos and more moving power. So also Alfred Noyes reading in public some of his own poems made us feel the force and urge of his peculiar personality surging in his verses, so that we knew the man better than ever before, and comprehended more fully the purpose and spirit and significance of his work.

The English-speaking world, which has read his poems for a score of years, is ready to listen when he talks. Since Matthew Arnold's visit no English poet has spoken in America so interestingly or with so much intelligence, meaning, and fullness concerning literature, while it is proper

and fair to say that he has shown himself to be a more sensible, civil, unpontifical, unsupercilious, and altogether better behaving person than Arnold was.

We are helped toward a correct apprehension and estimate of his significance in the literature of to-day by his clear and candid replies as to what he intends, what his aim and effort are; and this he does very directly and plainly. He talks as he writes, man-fashion. Prodded with questions as to his conception of the present-day mission of poetry, Noyes answered in his deliberate, thoughtful way: "Poetry can have only one real mission and be genuine poetry, successful poetry. It is summed up in a line of Herman Hagedorn's, 'Give us our gods again.' That is the whole keynote of the really great poetry of to-day, and the men who are doing work that is worth while are striving after that, consciously or unconsciously." The young poet broke off with a blush, but in a moment went on with a characteristic, slow, boyish smile: "You know it's awfully hard to talk on such a subject without seeming to be putting on a pious air. But I stick to the text I quoted a moment ago, 'Give us our gods again.' That's what people want, that's at the bottom of their cravings. I verily believe it is the reason for all these queer New Thought movements and strange sects that spring up among us like mushrooms or toadstools. My own work, I am aware, is pervaded by the spirit I

have spoken of. Not that I strive to put it in; I cannot honestly say that I do. I don't claim any credit for it. It gets into my work without effort; I suppose because it is a part of me. Some might attribute it to temperament. I dare say I summed it up pretty well in my poem called 'The Origin of Life.' " The poem referred to appeared, when materialistic and atheistic views touching the nature and origin of life were being publicly aired in scientific circles in England. Alfred Noyes made answer in the London Daily Mail through the poem to which he now refers us for the keynote of his creed, and in which we may hear his tuning-fork giving the pitch for all this singer's music.

His answer in that poem is like himself, direct, sincere, and sensible. He doubts and denies the atheistic dogma that all things that exist have sprung by chance out of original nothingness. He sees a significance in things which cannot be so accounted for to the human reason. He points to the significance of yon lighted city street, those towers that stand above it, that armored fleet, and all the triumphant achievements of the human intellect in the marvels of material civilization, possibly not unworthy of notice by a supreme Architect and Engineer of a universe. Is nothingness equal to producing them? He points to the significance of all the reverent "pageants of praise and prayer" which have made up human worship through countless centuries, not

unworthy the attention of an ever-adorable most-high God. Were they woven by chance out of nothing? The significance of "one little child with clasped hands praying"; and of "one martyr ringed with fire": is it nothing? The significance of "one woman's lovelit face"? Did nothingness produce them all and put their meaning in them? Or are they meaningless? And the great and little hills: were they upheaved by nothing out of nothingness—including one named Olivet (O hush at the sound of that name!) with the significance of a quenchless Light lingering on its summit and an undying Voice echoing on its slopes! Can nothingness manipulated by chance account for all of this?

Having thus applied, in a way that appeals to the common sense of most, the *reductio ad absurdum* to their teachings, or at least to compulsory corollaries and inevitable inferences therefrom, Alfred Noyes advises these scientists, searching back to the beginning of things, to put off their shoes from off their feet, because, for serious and reverent men, the ground is holy; he suggests that they would better kneel on the spot where they have denied; he summons them to help rekindle faith in the minds of faithless men by acknowledging that what they found at the end of that dark road they trod back to the primal origin of all things was "In the beginning God." He thinks the account of the creation in Genesis the greatest poetry ever written, poetry saturate

with the sublimest truth. Poetry is not something that is not true; it is the noblest possible statement of essential truth and fact.

In gentle and temperate fashion this earnest young poet proceeds: "In critical circles in England such disposition to negation and revolt prevails that it is impossible to speak in terms of faith or of optimistic affirmation without arousing shrill and strident contradiction. So revolutionary are these British critics that they express surprise that Milton and Browning are still read in America and Shakespeare considered worthy of occasional perusal and that you have not thrown Tennyson to the scrap heap. Many present-day poets, not content with seizing the Muse's torch from the hands of their predecessors and belaboring them over the nose with it, go on to throw the torch in the gutter, and often find themselves with a meaningless splutter of epigrammatic squibs, which do not illuminate, but merely burn their fingers." Commenting on this, an American newspaper remarks this same tendency of the literary mob here as in England to "throw away the Muse's torch and go dancing the turkey trot down the centuries in an unilluminating and sulphurous blaze of firecrackers and Bengal lights." By throwing himself with his whole force against all this, Alfred Noyes adds strength to literature and dignity to his own name. Concerning the weakening and destructive effect of negation and unfaith, Professor

Richardson, of Dartmouth, justly says: "Negation, whether it be right or wrong, tends to eat into literary product and to corrode reputation. So George Eliot, with a hundred merits, is an author of dwindling fame, while Dickens, with a hundred faults, rules with a broader sway than ever."

Alfred Noyes remarks on the unsteadiness and insecurity of unhopeful and negative views and the self-contradictions of the pessimists: "One of the most peculiar things about the men who try to write poetry that echoes the cynical, skeptical, pessimistic note is their inability to maintain consistency and the way they contradict themselves. For example, take Hardy: the best things he has ever done are the fresh, spontaneous, cheerful lyrics that breathe trust and an admission of the beneficent Unknown, of a great invisible Something that is good as well as all powerful. And this is the essence of optimism. Nearly all the poets of negation—even Shelley, who called himself an atheist and was expelled from Oxford University for it—have postulated bigger things than they denied. Shelley lived to write one of the most triumphant confessions of faith ever penned."

In further exposition of his idea of the mission of poetry Alfred Noyes goes on to say that he looks to poetry to bring to men a renewed sense of totality, to get the everyday, prosaic, commonplace fact in its proper place in the vast scheme

of things in relation to the eternal; to coordinate man and his life with the basic harmony which proceeds from the central Source of all things, by unity with which all our discords can be resolved; to insist that reason, and not madness, concord, and not discord, reigns. In a universe which is itself rhythmic and metrical, poetry should regulate the cadences, inflections, and surges of the human soul into harmony corresponding with cosmic movements—with swinging tides and circling stars, and all the periodicities of nature, the intermissions and recurrences, the seasons and successions, alternations, oscillations, and balancings, lapses and recurrences, the licit ebb and flow, surgings and subsidings, systole and diastole, inspirations and expirations, which give to the breathing, throbbing cosmos something like meter and rhyme and rhythm. “Throughout the universe,” he says, “the smallest break in the eternal order and harmony is an immeasurable vacuum of the kind that both art and science abhor; for, if we admit it, the universe has no meaning. The poet demanding that not a worm should be cloven in vain, or crying with Blake that a robin in a cage shakes heaven with anger, is at one with that profound truth—a sparrow shall not fall to the ground without our Father’s knowledge. The blades of the grass are all numbered. There is no break in the roll of that harmony ‘whereto the worlds beat time,’ and it is because great art

brings out, as a conductor with a wand, the harmonies hidden by the noise and jar of daily affairs, that in poetry, as time goes on, our race will come to find an ever surer and surer stay. A certain carping philosophy which poets will always resent denies this harmony and sees in the creation of this earth a mere accident, or the mistake of an eyeless blunderer, a hideous, blood-stained monster, a grinning jester. The poetry that shall dominate the next age will have nothing to do with such a spirit. All great poetry brings us in touch with the harmony which is the basis of the universe." Thus Alfred Noyes beats the drum of Eternity.

Resuming his talk about the proper business of the true poet, he says: "Poetry's mission should be to consecrate all life, to pour on every sphere of human action what Wordsworth calls 'the light that never was on sea or land,' and give to everything that touch of consecration which is every true poet's dream." "It may sound ludicrous," says Mr. Noyes, "to say that, if a poet writes about a modern skyscraper, his mission is to consecrate the skyscraper; but so it is nevertheless." Yes, surely. And that is what that brilliant boy Frederic Lawrence Knowles did in his lofty verses, "To a Modern Office Building," which Alfred Noyes would seem to have had in mind.

Buoyancy and joyousness may well be emphasized as elements in the significance and charm

of Alfred Noyes. Agnosticism and negation have no *Te Deums* and *Hallelujah Choruses*, nothing to be jubilant about, not music enough to make even one small cricket elate. With Tennyson and Browning gone and the major key sunk to the minor, and the rasping voice of the pessimist jarring the air, it was high time for a real musician like Alfred Noyes, in whom God once more sent a bugler with heart and lungs and lips to make the bugle give its proper golden cry, and to put courage into the hearts of men. In the disbelieving and blaspheming camp of the sour and sulky pessimists there is weeping and wailing and gnashing of teeth, or would be if they were consistent. At any rate, they set our teeth on edge as with the filing of a saw. "What do you miss most?" was asked of Lucifer, some time out of heaven. "The sound of the trumpet in the morning," answered he, down amid the dolor of a sinning and suffering earth. When Alfred Noyes puts the slughorn to his mouth and blows, we hear a trumpet that has the sound of morning in it. He rather than Swinburne, to whom the title was given, deserves to be called "the trumpet of days that darken."

The great Victorians—Browning and Tennyson—sang faith, hope, and love to the nineteenth century in a period which Ernest Hello described as "having desire without light, curiosity without wisdom, seeking God by strange ways, ways traced by the blind, and offering rash incense

upon the high places to an unknown God, who is the God of darkness." While those two great Victorians lived there was plenty of noble and heartening poetry in England. When they were gone, Frederic W. H. Myers, himself no mean poet (witness his lofty and ever-memorable "Saint Paul"), said: "There is no future for English verse. English poetry has come to an end." If it seemed so then it does not seem so now, for alone by himself Alfred Noyes is enough to dispel that gloomy view. And he believes with Matthew Arnold that the future of poetry is immense, "because in poetry which is worthy of its high destiny our race as time goes on will come to feel a surer and ever surer stay."

We have done little more than dwell upon a single phase of the significance of Alfred Noyes; but it is the phase which we count most interesting and important. From our point of view the highest value of his undeniable charm is that it has power to gain the attention of a world now sorely in need of the spirit and the truth which suffuse and vitalize his poetry.

A VETERAN MISSIONARY¹

WHY are we here? John Burroughs deifies Walt Whitman. We are Christians and not pagans; we do not deify any man. If this celebration were simply for the glorification of James M. Thoburn, he would hold up his hand in horror and in protest. If he were to speak to us here this afternoon, I think he would suggest that we join together in that refrain of the sweet and holy German hymn, "Let Jesus Christ be praised."

We are here to rejoice in a conspicuous illustration of what Jesus Christ can do with the man and the life wholly surrendered to his control. And its lesson, especially to the students of this college, is: Consecrate your life, fling it away in splendid abandon for Christ and the world, and see what will come of it for you in the fifty years ahead. It is for us to realize more fully through this celebration the ineffable majesty, the immeasurable power, the imperishable grandeur of Christian ideals and Christian service. If this be not the result, the whole program will be a profitless performance.

We are here to nail a few epithets upon the name of Thoburn, to call him some names indic-

¹Address at the jubilee celebration of Bishop James M. Thoburn, Allegheny College, Meadville, Pa.

ative of our thoughts about him and our feelings toward him.

I begin by calling him an enthusiast. I go to my dictionary for the meaning of the word, and Webster's first definition of an enthusiast is one who thinks himself divinely inspired, possessed of some special revelation. And for proof of the propriety of calling him an enthusiast I refer you to the September, 1906, number of the Methodist Review, in which you will find an article entitled "Inspiration" written by J. M. Thoburn. In that article he tells how as a missionary again and again he has felt himself to be directly inspired by God, has felt in his soul that he had a special revelation from him, not to be foisted upon the church or forced upon his brethren for their guidance, but absolutely peremptory for him in the marking out of his own plans and the choosing of his course. Thus has he lived his life and done his work, seeking guidance from God and getting it. This is notorious. Therefore, under that first definition of Webster, I charge that this man is one of the most magnificent enthusiasts ever produced in the history of Christianity.

And the second definition is like unto the first in its fitness and applicability, for by that definition an enthusiast is one whose mind is wholly possessed and heated by what engages it. And I ask you, who know men, whether that does not describe James M. Thoburn. Has he not been wholly engaged and heated by the great work

in which he has been engaged? I am reminded of that divine Enthusiast who set aside all claims of relationship and all other interests and said, "Wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business?"—and of that later enthusiast who said, "I am determined to know nothing among men save Jesus Christ and him crucified. This one thing I do. I count all things else as dung."

A splendid enthusiast, surely, under both definitions of the word, is this missionary bishop of India.

I trust I shall not desecrate this place nor violate the proprieties of this occasion if I say, in a sense the appropriateness of which will appear in a moment, I trust, that I have figured him in my mind as a plunger. Years ago when he was a young man I am told he was not an admirer of Browning and not a believer in his greatness. But one day in Singapore when weary, if not sick, he was lying down and resting; and Dr. H. C. Stuntz, who was with him, began to read to him parts of "Paracelsus." The Bishop listened until the reader reached that great passage about the pearl diver in which he says, "Are there not two points in the adventure of a diver, one when, a beggar, he prepares to plunge, one when, a prince, he rises with his pearl? Festus, I plunge." And the listening Bishop exclaimed: "Brother, I have done that many a time. I have plunged."

There are more points than two in the adven-

ture of a diver. This man knows that in his own personal experience. He has known what it is to stand alone, stripped of all secular ambitions, all thought of selfish advantage, naked of worldly resources, and plunge into the sunless depths of heathenism. He knows the experience of the diver as he gropes along the bottom in the mud and mire and slime of heathenism, feeling for pearls, immortal, unspeakably precious pearls. He knows the feeling of the diver when he closes his clutch upon the treasures of the deep; he knows the joy of the diver when he comes up out of the suffocation and the darkness and the mire and holds his pearl aloft in the face of heaven and the light of day. And in this man's case, when he plunged into the depths and came up with his treasures, it was not one pearl but, first and last, hundreds and thousands of pearls. This is what I mean when I call him a plunger. Empty-handed he plunged. He disappeared from sight. He stayed down a long time, sometimes. He was gone for years and we did not see him. But when he came back it was with his hands full of pearls. He knows what it is to make the grim plunge into dark depths and what it is to rise radiant, with his gleaming treasure.

I will call him a typical Christian product. The proof of Christianity is its products, in men, women, institutions, policies. Christianity, like Paul before Agrippa, is glad of the privilege anywhere to speak for itself, to make its argument

and present its proof, and everywhere, before the throne of reason, in the court of science, in the halls of culture and the seats of the mighty, it invites the sharpest criticism. Especially in the presence of the heathen faiths it says, "I count myself happy that I am permitted to answer for myself."

And it produces its proofs in its products—men. The Christian Church in America had such men as Thoburn to send to India, such men as Bashford and Lewis to go to China, such men as Hartzell to go to Africa, with thousands and thousands like them, first and last, to go to the darkened nations of the earth—Christian statesmen, Christian heroes, willing to toil terribly for the uplift of the nations and the glory of Christ, willing to lay down their lives in long labor or in sudden sacrifice, as the Master may demand.

Christ's products are seen in institutions also. Bishop Thoburn, you know better than I do, and your confidence in the prediction is stronger than mine intelligently can be, that the day will come when India, looking upon our institutions planted there by Christianity, will say: "The God that sends relief from famine, the God that builds asylums, that makes the deaf to hear, the blind to see, the lame to walk, through the beneficent and skillful ministry of Christian physicians, the God that sprinkles our land with schools to enlighten our darkness and elevate our degradation, the God that makes such a man as

John F. Goucher to plant and sustain a hundred and more schools in the villages of India, along with his monumental educational work, recognized by decorations from the governments of China and Japan, the God who as years go on raises up generation after generation of such men as these—the God that answereth by orphanages, let him be God! Yea, let the God of Christian institutions be our God forever and ever"! That is the cry that will sound all over India and other non-Christian lands in the day of the Lord.

In policies also Christianity has proofs to offer. Why is it that America stands to-day foremost in the eyes of the world among Christian nations? Because her policies toward the peoples of the world are more Christian than those of any other nation. What the United States has done in and for Cuba, what the United States has done and is doing in and for the Philippines, what the United States has done in and for China; what John Hay, a Christian statesman, the foremost diplomat and statesman of his time in all the world, did for diplomacy between nations when he made frankness and candor and openness and absolute truthfulness the rule and practice in diplomacy, instead of concealment and duplicity and trickery and intrigue; when he demonstrated that the Golden Rule of Jesus Christ is applicable and supremely wise in the affairs of nations as in the affairs of individuals; when he thus presented to the world the spectacle

of a Christian product in his own person and in the nation he represented—all this strengthened magnificently the evidences of Christianity. No wonder that a prominent official in one of the western provinces of China issued a proclamation in which he commended to the people of his province the Christian religion, the religion that could produce Americans who, having a great sum of money from the Chinese nation in their hands as an indemnity, all uncompelled and even unasked returned into the hands of China a large part of that indemnity. Such a national policy toward other nations presents evidences of Christianity which will irresistibly conquer the world.

One more epithet. I would call Bishop Thoburn a Christian field marshal. What, that gentle, mild-mannered, soft-voiced, and decidedly un-military-looking man, a field marshal! Yes, a soldier and a general for Jesus Christ. Years ago there died in Switzerland an old man who told as the most memorable event of his boyhood that once he had strayed into the French camp and had seen Napoleon Bonaparte down on his knees studying the map of Europe on a drum head. A significant sight, surely, for the peoples of Europe, when such a man as he goes to studying the map of Europe on a drum head! He was planning to roll that drum across the width of that map. He was studying the situation of the countries, for he meant to put his

armies in their capitals. He was tracing the boundaries of the kingdoms, for he meant to push his drum against them and shove them this way and that according to his own greedy wish and his own mighty will. Forty years ago in India you might have seen a frail, slender young man laying the map of India alongside his open Bible. He too was bent on conquest. He meant to do what he could to carry that Word of Life across the width of that Indian map, east and west, north and south. I call him as great a marshal in his purpose and insatiable longing for conquest in the Christian empire as Napoleon was in the military conquest of Europe. A Christian field marshal surely this man has been.

I said this celebration brings us here not to glorify a man, but to glorify Jesus Christ, who made him what he is and helped him to do what he has done. And I would like the privilege for just one moment of holding up Jesus Christ before these young people who are here, in order that, if possible, the glowing incandescence of this man's devotion may be kindled in you, and that Allegheny College, so honored in her sons and daughters in the past, may send forth from her doors to the ends of the earth many messengers of light who will carry the saving knowledge of Jesus Christ to the perishing nations.

On the first day I ever spent on English soil I heard the great Mr. Spurgeon address a convention of Baptist clergymen. His subject was

Jesus Christ, and the charge to his fellow ministers was that they should rouse themselves and lose themselves in Christ, that they should spend themselves unreservedly and passionately in his service. And he closed by reciting some of the words from Macaulay's poem where before the battle of Ivry the soldiers said concerning Henry of Navarre, their king and leader :

"The king is come to marshal us, in all his armor drest;
And he has bound a snow-white plume upon his gallant
crest.

Right graciously he smiled on us, as rolled from wing to
wing,

Down all our line, a deafening shout: 'God save our lord
the king!'"

And then King Henry, speaking to his army, said :

"'And if my standard-bearer fall, as fall full well he may,
For never saw I promise yet of such a bloody fray,
Press where ye see my white plume shine amidst the
ranks of war,
And be your oriflamme to-day the helmet of Navarre.'"

And then Spurgeon held up Christ as the divine Captain, the leader who goes forth to certain conquest, who should kindle our souls and our devotion a thousandfold more than any human leader that ever called men to his standard.

Dear young people, rich and fine with the learning of the schools and the discipline of training, now, when the call is sounding,

"The Son of God goes forth to war:
Who follows in his train?"

summon your whole being—"body, soul, and spirit," as the old knights used to say—to respond,

"Be swift, my soul, to answer Him!
Be jubilant, my feet!"

HUMILITY

THE New Testament is the textbook of humility. Whoso undertakes to live by it must be willing to be humble-hearted. About this there is no room for dispute. Our Lord and Saviour said: "Learn of me; for I am meek and lowly of heart." And again: "Whosoever shall humble himself as a little child, the same is greatest in the kingdom of heaven." The children of this world are out of sympathy with such teachings. That wild genius, Nietzsche, saved us the trouble of branding him as an immoralist by calling himself by that name. In addition his vanity prompted him to claim to be "the great immoralist," wherein his vanity led him astray, there being numerous persons in prison and out of it who easily exceeded Nietzsche in the actual perpetration of immorality. Denouncing the Christian virtues in general, he particularly declared humility to be a mean, unmanly, pusillanimous, and contemptible trait, the mark of a weak nature. In so saying he illustrated the universal truth that whoso contradicts Jesus Christ on matters of which he spoke is a fool as well as a blasphemer. Nietzsche's topsy-turvy brain constructed an inverted moral cosmogony, stood the universe on its head, wrenched reason and con-

science and truth asunder, and made "a mad world, my masters," before he was himself carried to the madhouse. There is no reason why we should take a lunatic's lucubrations very seriously; yet his bitter antagonism to Christ and Christian teaching affords fresh proof that the carnal mind, the spirit of this world, is enmity against God. A fair exhibition of Nietzsche's temper was in his saying that if any gods whatever existed, he could not possibly endure not to be a god himself. He never would consent that any being should be greater than he was. "Therefore," he reasoned, "there cannot be any God or gods," which reasoning seems to have satisfied his own mind, but is far from convincing to the rest of mankind. The natural effect of the supernatural gospel, the work of Christ in the hearts of men, is to make them humble and keep them so. Bishop H. H. Montgomery, secretary of the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts, himself English to the core, speaking of the effect of the gospel upon the English race, says: "The Englishman does not see God easily. It is hard for him not to be an agnostic. It is one of the marvels of history that our English race has become an apostle and herald of the faith. We do not lack fiber, but more than any other race we need a broken heart; and that fracture was effected by the power of the gospel."

Broken-heartedness and humility are endan-

gered by prosperity and success, prominence and power; and the loss of them means deterioration in the man himself and probably in the quality of his products. Dr. John Brown, the wise Edinburgh physician, referring to the danger of elation and inflation from popularity, says: "Generally speaking, a man should stand in doubt of himself when he is very popular. He should suspect that there must be some bit of quackery about him. Few things are more disorganizing to the intellect and to the moral sense, or more likely to develop the hump and deform the man, than that open-mouthed readiness on the part of the public to take anything from some men and to applaud everything they say. No man's greatest was ever brought forth under such conditions, or in the intoxicating atmosphere of popularity and adulation."

When self-complacency takes the place of humility beauty of character is blemished and tarnished. Bishop Wiley and a friend, walking along a city street, paused in front of a photographer's window to look at the picture of a noted preacher. Both agreed that it was lifelike. As they resumed their walk Bishop Wiley pertinently remarked in his cool, quiet way: "I have long had three wishes. One is that I might have five months of perfect health; another is that I might have five weeks of perfect rest; and the third is that I might have five minutes of perfect satisfaction with myself—just to know how it

feels." The gentle irony of the last clause in the Bishop's remark means that self-complacency is not a grace of character nor an admirable condition of mind. Loss of humility leaves one a prey to vanity which sometimes swells to grotesque proportions. William Winter tells of a notoriously egotistical clergyman concerning whom it was said, when inquiry was made as to what that self-satisfied ecclesiastic was doing, "He is waiting for a vacancy in the Trinity." There have been persons who wore such an absurdly lofty air as to recall "Rule Forty-two" which the King in *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* read from his book: "All persons more than a mile high must leave the court." It is easy to smile at egregious vanity, for its antics often contribute to the gayety of nations; but in reality it is no laughing matter; it rots the roots of character and often becomes a vice in morals. Moreover, it invites and frequently bodes disaster. He who carries a high head and rides a high horse is probably riding for a fall. History is full of illustrations. The downfall of Cicero from his pinnacle of influence in Rome is thus touched upon by Macaulay: "The vice of egotism was rapidly growing on Cicero. He had attained the highest point of power which he ever reached, and his head was undoubtedly a little turned by his elevation. Afterward this vile habit tainted his speaking and writing, so as to make much of his finest rhetoric almost disgusting. On all occasions he gave him-

self airs which, as Plutarch tells us, made him generally odious and were the real cause of his banishment from Rome." Cicero's speech on behalf of the poet Archias, a magnificent encomium, was so blemished by insufferable egotism that Macaulay cries out: "What unhappy madness led Cicero always to talk of himself? He was really mad with vanity." And, largely because of this, darkness and impending danger were gathering around Cicero.

A plain American was waiting at the railway station at Geneva, Switzerland, when the Shah of Persia, Nasr-Ed-Din, rode up in a carriage guarded by armed postilions and outriders to take the train. His face was the most imperious and despotic ever seen—like that of a tyrant accustomed to take men's heads off with a look. As he stepped upon the station platform he passed within three feet of the American. The latter did not step back, but stood rather more erect than usual, and looked calmly into the haughty and almost menacing eyes of the monarch, thinking within himself, "The ruler who carries such a face as that invites assassination"—which was the fate that finally overtook that Shah.

If it be true that popularity and high position endanger a man's humility, it is also true that humbleness of heart is all the more needful for filling such a position well, and if the voters or appointers could prediscern which man of ability was sane enough and steady enough and sweet-

souled enough to retain his humility after elevation, he is the man whom they would exalt. It is also true that humility is possible in the highest place; and if any man occupying such a place wishes to crown his other qualifications with the one superlative grace which will win divine approval and compel the homage of human love, let him kneel on the height where he has been placed and pray to heaven for a humble heart.

In Lake Maggiore, Italy, on one of the Borro-mean Islands is an old palace the striking feature of which is the word "Humilitas," lettered large on all parts of the building, without and within. A palatial villa blazoned with "Humility" strikes the tourist as an incongruity. But a sweet and humble spirit is sometimes found in high places; and lowly station is no guarantee against a morose, overbearing, and domineering spirit. Matthew Simpson was noted for sweetness of nature and gentleness of manner. The near friends of Edward G. Andrews caught every now and then a glimpse of the genuine humility of his inmost heart. Both these men were exacting toward themselves and had deep reverence for their work; the modesty of great ability and of noble nature was exemplified in them. Bishop Andrews, though the most orderly and accurate of bishops, when once a slight mistake in one of his reports was pointed out to him, saw it at a glance, and with chagrin on his face, and a tone of impatience at himself in his voice, said, "That

shows what a fool I am." So solemn was his sense of responsibility for doing his work well that he flogged himself for any imperfection therein. Men knew him to be very capable and very careful; but he told of his blunders. A most discerning sentence in the Episcopal Address at the General Conference of 1908 speaks of Bishop Andrews as being "held in high esteem for the qualities in which he thought himself deficient." He was held in high esteem for pure and fervent piety, and his brethren were so sure of him in this that his frequent "Amen" was an uplift and reenforcement to them when they prayed or preached in his presence; but he esteemed others better than himself, and wished he could be as good as his brethren—of like spirit with another who said, "I try to be as pious as I can, but am careful not to imagine myself to be more pious than my brethren." Bishop Andrews was held in high esteem for wisdom, but he had been heard to call himself a fool. He was held in high esteem for good judgment as to men and things, but he thought his judgment must be very poor, because men and things sometimes turned out different from his expectations and predictions. He was held in high esteem as being learned in law and history and precedent and in other things, but he regarded himself as only a student, not a master; and he died learning. When past eighty and on the retired list, he still kept alert watch for the best new books and kept

on buying them with the eager thirst of a young preacher. One summer day in our New York bookstore, looking over the newest books, he caught sight of Dr. W. M. Ramsay's portly volume on the *Epistles to the Seven Churches in Asia*. The price was three dollars, no discount allowed, and he on half salary. He glanced through it, fondled it, and said: "I don't see how I can afford it, but I must have it." And he lugged it off, with that deliciously guilty feeling which a minister has when he knows he has committed the crime of extravagance in buying books. His colleagues called him "a wonderful man," but when this came to his ears he said, quite sharply: "O, pshaw!"

Self-excusing is a vicious habit, due to fond love and a want of true humility. The Flagellants of the Middle Ages were fanatics doubtless, but they had sense enough to whip themselves for their sins and faults and not to blame their failures on something or somebody else. We are too ready to lay the blame of our mistakes and shortcomings on circumstances, on our fellow men, on our wives, or even sometimes on God, as did the little girl who sat by the table under the evening lamp working with a distressed face at her arithmetic lesson for to-morrow, and who, when asked what was the matter, replied: "I can't do my sums, and I've asked God to help me, and he's made three mistakes already." Shakespeare has difficulty in persuad-

ing us that "it is not in our stars but in ourselves that we are underlings." The wisest word said by Hamilton W. Mabie at a dinner given in his honor by the University Club in New York was this: "I have always heard that a man is in the sanest attitude toward life when he charges his failures straight home to himself, to his lack of vision, his lack of grasp, his lack of continuity and persistence, his lack of character; and that, in taking account of his successes, if he have any, he ought to recognize humbly how much he may have owed to propitious circumstances, to the helpful favor of his fellow men, and to the unmerited mercy of Divine Providence." On the other hand, in explaining the successes of other men we need to beware of supposing them to be due to accident or good luck or favoritism on the part of God. It has been well said that when you see a man who has achieved eminent success, you may be sure it is not due to good luck, but because he has persistently used means of self-discipline which the average man neglects.

"The heights by great men reached and kept
Were not attained by sudden flight;
But they, while their companions slept,
Were toiling upward in the night."

Blessed is the man who guards against self-complacency, who deals austere with himself, plays the part of stern schoolmaster toward his powers, and drives his nature with a firm will, making his faculties feel "the curb that galls and the

lash that falls and the sting of the roweled steel." The moment of self-indulgence is the moment of unworthiness and peril.

Kipling somewhere speaks of a soldier learning to count his regiment a holy thing; which means that the man comes to worship his part in the regiment and his obligation to it with every drop of his blood, and is ready to bleed his veins empty on any field in service of the cause in which his regiment is enlisted. Lack of deep reverence for and real devotion to his regiment and his work is the secret of the inefficiency of many and the decline and downfall of some. One morning, in a General Conference session, two members of a certain delegation spied a man of rather lofty bearing sitting uninvited on the platform near the bishops. The man was then without a church and on the supernumerary list because of his unwillingness to accept what the appointing power could give him. Once in his life he was pastor of a famous church in a great and beautiful city. The devil tempted him to infer that he himself must be great and beautiful too or he would not be in such a place; and consulting his self-consciousness the man found that it confirmed the devil's suggestion. That was, practically, the end of his ministry, as the cunning devil meant it should be. After that the man virtually said to the appointing powers: "I will accept another pastorate, if you will offer me one worthy of so great a man as I know my-

self to be. Otherwise, gentlemen, I will not condescend to preach the everlasting gospel to a lost world any more." Thenceforth the church had no place to offer that was up to his demands. Said one General Conference delegate to his neighbor, looking at the tall, erect, imposing figure on the platform: "How is it that the church has no place for that man?" "Because lordliness is not wanted anywhere," was the reply. Puffed up with vanity and a sense of his own dignity, a lordly feeling had taken possession of the man; and all humility, all reverence for the sanctity of his high commission, all sense of the hallowed glory of the privilege of being, with Paul, the slave of Jesus Christ for the saving of the souls for whom Christ died, had departed from him; and with these went by degrees all fear of God. To quote from the "Idylls of the King," "He was up so high in pride, that he was half way down the slope to hell." Never again did he deign to honor the Lord Christ by making a business of proclaiming his message to a lost world. He himself joined the lost world. Through years utterly secularized and filled with deterioration of character and deepening disrepute, his career declined to an end too scandalous and too tragic to relate. All because his foolish heart grew proud. Even a little lowliness of mind and reverence for the Master and his work would have saved him. If he had kept humbly and loyally at his blessed task,

gladly preaching the gospel and ministering to immortal souls wherever Providence and the church assigned him, as thousands of greater and better men than he have done, all would have been well; he might have lived in the odor of sanctity and died lamented. But he sulked in the tent of his pride and went no more forth to the battle. He took no more orders from the Captain of Salvation who had done him the enormous honor of calling him to the ministry in the days of his youth. He became a recreant, a deserter, and a traitor. He turned his back on his Lord, and Christ had to let go of him; after that, shame and the outer darkness. And the pity of it is that it was all so foolish, unnecessary, inexcusable, willful, and wanton. This unhappy apostate might just as easily have been happy, if only, instead of listening to the devil who prompted him to *demand* a position equal to his own conception of his powers, he had listened to the words of Phillips Brooks: "Do not pray for easy lives; pray to be stronger men. Do not pray for tasks equal to your powers; pray for powers equal to your tasks. Then the doing of your work shall be no miracle, but you shall be a miracle. Every day you shall wonder at yourself, at the richness of life which has come to you by the grace of God." Or if he had not ceased to read the Bible which lay on his study table and from which he had preached for years, the faithful old Book would have admon-

ished him that "pride goeth before destruction and a haughty spirit before a fall," and that "a man's pride shall bring him low, but honor shall uphold the humble in spirit."

Dr. Stephen Paget tells of a famous physician who lived to be seventy-five—longer than was quite agreeable, and longer than he really desired. For years he was retired from practice by age and infirmities, and those years seemed empty and irksome to him; but in retirement he was comforted always by the thought that he had tried to do his best, had worked hard and close, had neglected no opportunity for service, and had never swerved from his life-purpose. He mourned the end of his work; it seemed to him like a funeral. But when his beloved work died, he rejoiced that his work and he had never in all the years been at variance; he had never quarreled with his work. He had loved, cherished, and honored it, and had clung to it so long as he had strength. He used to say that oftentimes, when thinking of his work, sentences of the marriage service would run in his head; and he would find himself saying to his work, *With my body I thee worship—till death us do part—I take thee only unto me so long as we both shall live.* And there had never been a cross word between him and his work for all the forty years. With body and soul he had worshiped his work. That fact was very dear to him, and, now that his work was ended, he consoled him-

self with that precious memory. Every doctor, if he lives long enough (every minister, too), must attend the funeral of his work. If he has not really loved it, he will not be sorry except for the loss of income and of his sense of self-importance; and the general air and tone of the obsequies over the end of his work will be that of Gounod's Funeral March of a Marionette. But this old physician, at the death and burial of his loved work, was crying; yet a grand figure he was: and the whole place was deferential with tender and admiring respect, and hundreds of kind hearts put up the shutters of sympathy and pity. Disabled from service, he drew a pension, not in money but in peace of mind, in a clear conscience, in a name honored far and wide, in love, faith and hope, and in a shrewd and mellow wisdom. All these were rewards of faithful work. In his retirement he attained something of the courage of a soldier and the patience of a saint. In the University of Old Age, that grim seat of desperate learning, he finished his education and took his degree. Dr. Paget's picture befits, as well, the old age of a minister who has worshiped his God-given work.

In his farewell address to the General Conference of the Japan Methodist Church at Tokyo in 1907, Dr. Goucher said: "It will not be given to all of us to do some great thing; but if we are lowly in heart and full of God's spirit, we may teach some infant life, we may move some

youth to such purpose as to bring him a vision of God so that when we are gone and forgotten his life shall be a tower of strength and he shall accomplish a thousandfold more than we could do."

We are told that a teacher once gave to his students this parable of the Holy Shadow :

"Long, long ago there lived a saint so good that the astonished angels came down from heaven to see how a mortal could be so godly. He simply went about his daily life, diffusing virtue as the star diffuses light and the flower perfume without even being aware of it. Two words summed up his day: he gave, he forgave. Yet these words never fell from his lips; they were expressed in his ready smile, in his kindness, forbearance, and charity.

"The angels said to God: 'O Lord, grant him the gift of miracles!' God replied: 'I consent; ask him what he wishes.'

"So they said to the saint: 'Should you like the touch of your hands to heal the sick?' 'No,' answered the saint, 'I would rather God should do that.' 'Should you like to become a model of patience, attracting men by the luster of your virtues?' 'No,' replied the saint; 'if men should become attached to me, they might be estranged from God.' 'What do you desire, then?' cried the angels. 'What can I wish for?' asked the saint, smiling. 'That God give me his grace; and with that shall I not have everything?'

"But the angels insisted: 'You must ask for a miracle, or one will be forced upon you.' 'Very well then,' replied the saint; 'let this be the miracle—that I may do a great deal of good without ever knowing it.'

"The angels were greatly perplexed. They took counsel together, and resolved upon this plan. Every time the saint's shadow should fall behind him or at either side, so that he could not see it, the shadow should have the power to cure disease and soothe pain and comfort sorrow.

"And so it came to pass. When the saint walked along, his shadow, thrown on the ground on either side or behind him, made arid paths green, caused withered plants to bloom, gave clear water to dried-up brooks, fresh color to the faces of pale little children, and joy to unhappy mothers.

"But the saint simply went about his daily life, diffusing virtue as the star diffuses light and the flower perfume without ever being aware of it. And the people, respecting his humility, followed him silently, never speaking to him about his miracles. Little by little they even came to forget his name, and called him only 'The Holy Shadow.' "

The man had lost himself in his work. This is an ideal not beyond the reach of common men like us, if we are willing so to submerge ourselves. Words written once before return to memory here: When a man learns that he himself is of

no account, that his God-given work is the all-important thing, and buries himself in it, then for the first he ceases to be a nuisance and begins to be of use. Then he is getting ready for the day when he shall render his account with joy and not with grief, saying: "Master, behold my sheaves."

